

NOV 11 1920

The  
Saturday ReviewNo. 3390. Vol. 130. 16 October 1920 [REGISTERED AS A  
NEWSPAPER] 6d.

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.—The Editor cannot undertake to return rejected Communications. He must also decline to enter into correspondence with writers of MSS. sent in and not acknowledged. It is preferred that MSS. should be typewritten.

## NOTES OF THE WEEK

Parliament reassembles on Monday after a long vacation, during which period the country has of its own accord worked out some small measure of its own salvation. Without doubt we are over-governed. If Parliament would but stick to its own legitimate sphere, and do well what is expected of it, we might be better off than we are. Let it deal quickly and firmly with the midsummer madness of that visionary couple, the Ministers of Health and Education, and let it rid the country at once of those worthless departments which still clog the wheels of industry and commerce. Let it tackle the unpleasant subject of finance without delay, so that some measure of confidence may be restored. Legislation which was a necessity in war-time, has become irksome and a hindrance. It has outlived its day and remains but a job-inspiring concern. Let the people work—if they will—and make it possible for them to do so in their own way. There are problems enough for Parliament—Ireland, India, Mesopotamia, and the restoration of financial stability.

Mr. Lloyd George's defence of the Coalition at Llandudno must have been disappointing, even to his friends. His flowery phrases were but the common-places of party politics, and if they soothed his Welsh admirers for the time, his careful path-finding must exasperate those who looked forward to a plain statement. But the Prime Minister is incapable of a plain statement on things which really matter. Like the shopkeeper who has no apples in the apple season, he dresses his window with bananas. The public are impatient of forensic fencing. They want to know what is to become of their country and themselves. He does not defend the Treaty of Versailles, save to the extent that it is better than no treaty at all. He who shook the hands of murderers and robbers now doubts their *bona fides*. The public demand for economy he passes with jeering comments. There is no

extravagance; a Coalition Government will bring peace to Ireland; safeguard his Coalition, and everything will take care of itself. The lost confidence which he deplores so pathetically will not be restored by last Friday's rhetoric, while Victory Bonds are marked at £73½ sellers, and Consols, once £112, as low as £45½.

"The Transport Ministry costs at present one-quarter of a farthing in the pound on the Income Tax" (the italics are ours). This was the only reference to Government finance at Llandudno; a subtle evasion of an awkward question. A quarter of a farthing in the pound! clever politician, foolish financier. So loose a statement betrays the spendthrift. Figures are anathema to our Premier, but let him state them, bald and uninspiring though they may be. Reference to a fraction of a farthing and the simile of the widow's mite are misleading and false. Accountants reckon costs and profits to the hundredth part of a penny per unit of production, and the aggregate turnover is the objective of their labour. It is as if one said: "Let us give young Evans a £500 job in the Ministry of Sinecures; £500 is only such-and-such a fraction of a farthing on the vote for the Department." True: but there may be many Evanses, and the fraction grows with their number. The cost of Government is more than the country can bear, and it is composed of quarters-of-a-farthing in the pound.

The peace between Russia and Poland was signed on Tuesday last. But General Zeligovski, giving up his command in the Polish Army, has occupied Vilna, the capital of Lithuania, broken the agreement between the two parties, and neglected the warnings of the French and British Governments. The Warsaw authorities are thus confronted with another adventurer of D'Annunzio's sort, who at present refuses to recognise them, and talks of "self-determination," a blessed word in the New Europe. Can the League of Nations do anything?

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Evidence is rapidly accumulating to prove that the Chancellor's golden E.P.D. eggs are becoming alarmingly few and small. Furthermore, it would appear that their production has so impoverished the parent bird that her life is in danger. In times of booming industry the tax provided every inducement to extravagance and evasion; now, strange though it may seem, traders and manufacturers showing a loss reckon on it for support, and firms owing E.P.D. on their profits in recent years will claim its repayment as a set-off for their losses. Not only, therefore, does the Treasury lose its estimated revenue, but its actual revenue as well. Surely Mr. Austen Chamberlain and his advisers have the wit to discover a tax which will neither discourage nor demoralise the whole community? What sane man is likely to embark time or money in a commercial venture with labour and money standing as they do? At the best, his return is fixed by E.P.D. at a level which leaves him no more than his bare money could earn, while he has every reason to anticipate endless worry and heavy loss. As taxes are produced by industry, our position is obvious.

Some notable recent decisions inspire the hope that a stand is to be made against the tyranny imposed on the people at a time when they were too much concerned elsewhere to resist. Alderman MacSwiney of Cork is to commit suicide—if he can; the coal miners are to earn what they get; murderers in Ireland are to be hunted and destroyed. In short, the long-suffering citizen is to be protected from the impostor and the tyrant. Every politician worthy of the name has a solution for the ills of Ireland; but meanwhile General Macready will protect the law-abiding and punish the guilty, until Parliament decides what manner of government the real Ireland requires and can be trusted with. It is reassuring to hear that neither an Irish army nor an Irish navy will be considered, although for many reasons it might be a fitting punishment that Ireland should have both.

It was unfortunate for Messrs. Bevin and Williams that their visit to Leith followed on the heels of the Ilford election. Mr. Bevin feels sure that Labour is fit and ready to govern, and that it will do so sooner than most people expect. On the other hand, Ilford told Labour in no uncertain fashion that it thinks otherwise. Ilford is a working-class district, a stronghold of the better working-class—what those who are fond of classifying the people according to their income or occupation might call the lower middle class. Ilford has therefore a stake in the country; it is a centre of home life, and its inhabitants are both industrious and thoughtful. And it is clearly against "Labour" in the political sense. Messrs. Bevin and Williams must have felt uncomfortable, for they sought funds to support the discredited *Daily Herald*, and it is only the black-coat worker who reads anything more serious than football papers or a crime-retailing Sunday publication. The Ilford result was therefore far from stimulating, either for the *Daily Herald* or its subscription-collectors.

One must at least give Mr. Smillie credit for eleventh-hour wisdom. Seeing the *impasse* whereto he had led his followers, he wished to extricate them before it was too late, before his organisation was rent asunder and the support of less fanatical leaders and unions was withdrawn. Sir Robert Horne gave him a fair opening, and, like a wise man, he took it. Weeks ago he saw the odds against him, but he played his hand out in the hope of saving a trick. Now the miners have voted against the datum line, and further negotiations are expected. Sir Robert Horne's handling of a dangerous situation makes the nation his debtor. It is perhaps unfortunate that Mr. Smillie and other trade union leaders did not always have so courteous and broad-minded a negotiator to deal with as the present Minister of Labour.

How came Messrs. Vickers to pay Commander Burney £265,000 for "certain patent rights" relating

to paravanes, and how was a naval officer on active service in a position to accept it? The facts were stated during the hearing by the Royal Commission on Awards to Inventors, of claims by several officers and one civilian, in connection with the adoption of the paravane in ship defence. Captain Osborne had received £4,800 from the same source, and all the claimants, it was stated, received a certain amount of remuneration. The paravane is a natural development of the otter trawl, and although naval officers may have been ignorant of its application, hundreds of people conversant with this fisherman's tool recommended it to the naval authorities directly or indirectly. We are told that Commander Burney (presumably a son of Admiral Burney) was sent to the Admiralty in 1916, in charge of the designs of all anti-mine apparatus. While there he had access to all the designs which had been submitted, and he obtained patents for various devices which, a rival claimant maintained, had been in use before. We may be wrong, but it was our impression that patents acquired by officers on active service during the war were vested in the Crown. Counsel for Commander Burney stated that no portion of the £265,000 came from the Government; but Messrs. Vickers only pay so large a sum in order that they may make a profit on the investment, and there was but one source from which such profit could come, to wit, the British Government. The Admiralty might explain to emaciated taxpayers these remarkable wartime transactions between private firms and public servants. We have already heard and commented upon Messrs. Vickers' dealings with Sir Percy Scott. The firm appears to have had deep pockets; many and much have been in them, although shareholders have reaped but a scanty harvest.

"After careful consideration" the Board of Trade has decided not to appoint a Committee to investigate charges of profiteering in printing paper. Judging by the results of other investigations, the decision may be a wise one. Petty charges against small shopkeepers are the sole successes of this soothing invention. The department is woefully ignorant of what is happening and of what has happened. Or it may be conveniently blind. Meanwhile, after an absence of six years, German paper has reappeared on the market, and our paper manufacturers and merchants are astonished to find that it is readily absorbed. Like many others, they hoped that this country would never again buy from Germany; but British paper is and has been so dear, and British paper manufacturers and merchants are so rich, while printers, publishers and paper users throughout the country are so impoverished, that paper would be bought at a reasonable price from Hades itself. Patriotism in commerce is a threadbare cloak these days.

We learn with concern that some forty people are leaving the country in order to enjoy life on a South Sea island, free from excessive taxation. Mr. Rhodes Disher, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, leads the pioneers, and Mr. C. O. Kerry will command the good ship *Medora*, a schooner yacht recently purchased for the adventure. Till an island or part of an island has been secured, the party will live aboard their vessel, and one strict rule has been made—there shall be no politics. A happy island, and assuredly a trusting flock! Alas, the 45-year-old *Medora* is but 97 feet in length and 20 feet in beam. Mr. Disher may know his geography; and although some of his expeditions have suffered mischance, Captain Kerry may know his navigation; yet, if we know aught of human nature, there will be worse than politics on the overlaid craft. Better to earn and pay one's taxes than to lose one's temper or one's all.

From Ludendorff's Secret Story in the *Sunday Times* it appears that neither he nor Hindenburg was able in 1918 to claim a dictator's position in political as well as military matters of Germany. Von Hertling as Imperial Chancellor found it "intolerable" that the Field Marshal and General Ludendorff should

make the prosecution of their indispensable labours dependent on the fulfilment of political demands, when the decision as to the necessity of such demands has been assigned by the constitution exclusively to the Crown and its legal and responsible adviser." The Kaiser agreed that "the political structure of the German Empire knows only one responsible Minister—the Imperial Chancellor." An Appendix to the correspondence expressly declares that the Chancellor alone is responsible for peace negotiations, though the military authorities may on their own initiative suggest, advise, object, or warn.

It is a pity that with all their love of control, the authorities cannot do something to restrict the activities of the innumerable Correspondence Colleges now preying on the credulous public. Their victims are mostly women who seek to earn a livelihood by pen or pencil, and who pay the extortionate fees on the strength of specious promises of remunerative employment. For the most part, these women belong to the class which is suffering great hardship to-day, and who would eke out a small fixed income with home work, in order to meet the increased cost of living. We have a case before us now: a girl on whom an invalid sister is dependent. Lured by the ingenious advertisements, she submitted a specimen of her work, which, needless to say, was pronounced full of promise. The heavy fees were paid, the course commenced and finished; but when it came to the point which mattered to the poor girl, the question of employment, there was silence—a curt word of encouragement, then again silence. Her fees were paid, let her fish for herself; we must fish for others. The whole thing is a fraud, and should be stopped.

Here are our old friends the Pelman Institute pushing their educational wares in large-space advertisements throughout the press, using testimonials which were paid for. Pelmanists, they tell us, have doubled and trebled their incomes as a result of their system, yet in the Stock Exchange Supplementary Share List of 8th October, the 8 per cent. preference shares of the Pelman Institute are quoted at only 14s. 1½d. Why don't they publish that as a testimonial, instead of Sir W. Robertson Nicoll's effusion? Schools of mind-training, journalism, and art should come under the control of the Board of Education and be subject to supervision. Their proprietors might teach Mr. Fisher how to peddle education a little better than he does; they might even show him how they make a profit where he makes the enormous deficit which will well-nigh break the already rounded back of every rate- and taxpayer in the country.

While it is a strange anomaly that many, coaxed by wily advertising, will pay much to procure what they are urged to accept for nothing (and the genuine article at that), it is stranger far that Mr. Fisher and his colleagues take not the slightest interest in two real educational factors, the "popular" press and the cinema theatre. Children, both young and old, learn much from both sources, and it would be hard to say which is the more degrading. We raise our hands in horror at the loose morals and idleness of the younger generation, but record sales, loudly vaunted, are obtained by the purveying of social or sentimental piffle, and the conducting of vapid competitions and lotteries; while the best filled picture theatres of the poorer districts show to the youngest of both sexes stories in pictures which are both indecent and inartistic, deliberately disquieting to the undeveloped mind. Well might the Minister of Education say to some newspaper proprietors: "You have received honours at our hands; honour us in turn. Let no page pass to the public which you would not be pleased to read and discuss in the privacy of your family circles." The producers of pictures for exhibition are more nebulous and less personal, but if no sense of responsibility can be brought home to them as individuals, there is as an alternative a real and intelligent censorship.

The casual comment of an East London magistrate on the relationships between white women and men of yellow races has been seized upon with avidity by the *chiffonniers* of Fleet Street. The sight of a white woman in the company of Chinamen is repugnant to men of her race, yet here the women are to blame. The Chinaman is a clean, hardworking fellow, and if he marries a white woman he treats her with respect and with kindness, which cannot always be said of a husband of her own colour. But the girls and women whom the press would paint so white are neither more nor less than harpies, who waylay sailors of all colours that they may wheedle or steal from them their hard-earned money. The China Town of 'Limehouse Nights' does not exist. The fields of Poplar are drab places, singularly devoid of the romance which emanated from the brain of Mr. Thomas Burke. And the worst people in Limehouse are not yellow, nor are they as tolerant and generous to the coloured alien as the latter is in his own country to the white.

English book-lovers complain that the treasures they want to secure frequently go to America to be sold there. Mr. A. Edward Newton in his 'Amenities of Book-Collecting' gives a reason for this. He writes that the great Hoe collection was sold in New York City a few years ago, in order to escape from the operation of the "knock-out" at auctions, which makes it practically impossible for a private person to buy a book at a fair price. America does not practise this form of trade smartness, which "results in enriching the London book-dealer at the expense of the owner or the estate whose books are being sold. The existence of the "knock-out" is pretty generally admitted by the London dealers, but they usually couple the admission with the statement that no reputable dealer will have anything to do with its operations. It is always the other fellow who is in the ring." Mr. Newton's frankness is refreshing.

Mr. Heinemann has left, subject to two bequests and a life interest to relatives, half of his estate as a gift to the Royal Society of Literature for the establishment of a foundation or scholarship fund. This is designed for the recognition of literary work of real value, i.e., "those classes of literature which are least remunerative." In this present world most of the rewards go to work which is not literature, and the serious writer drags on a miserable existence. A sordid career like that of George Gissing is a disgrace to a society which pretends to cultivation. Following the example of other nations, benefactors have started a prize or two in this country; but the civil list pensions remain a monument of official stinginess, where literature is concerned. We hope the Royal Society of Literature will take their duties seriously, even if they have to call in outside help to discover the right sort of author to encourage. For all the world cares, its best writers may starve, while they are alive: when they are dead and famous, millionaires will pay huge prices for discarded scraps of their writing.

Contractors owing to labour troubles are frequently having to contract nowadays, instead of expanding, as they did in the war—"multis utile bellum," as Lucan calls it. But one class of business must be largely on the increase—the manufacture of perfumes and unguents for feminine skins that need, as the advertisements say, the hue of health. The resultant hue, as a matter of fact, suggests something very different. But nothing will stop even young girls who have no ravages of time to repair, from loading their faces with "creams," and dabbing on lip salve in public. And advertisement or fashion has penetrated so far that even in rural England, twenty miles from a town, flappers paint their faces as Jezebel did. We wonder that parents allow it; but there is no parental authority at the present day, when we find a mother summoning her boy of nine for stealing!



## EGYPT.

SMALL wonder is it that the British race is dubbed "mad" by a large portion of the habitable globe. Natives of the vast dominions overseas which we control or protect look upon this affliction of ours with a generous and wondering eye; we are so strangely altruistic, bearing other men's burdens, incurring fantastic expenditure, facing incalculable risks, reducing chaos to order—yet taking no money, even secretly, for any of these inestimable benefits to other people. But other nations contemplate our madness with a more critical eye. Just as they endeavour to copy, without understanding, our successful Constitution which is the growth of centuries and has never been committed to paper, so they try in vain to grasp in their net of logic the vagaries of British policy both at home and abroad. They confess that our principles elude them as completely as our results surprise them. Therefore, they conclude that the British system of Government must be based upon some deep-laid Machiavellian foundations, and that, in consequence, all our actions must be regarded, whatever be our professions, with suspicion and distrust. They invest our madness with a method which, in fact, does not exist; indeed, Lord Rosebery spoke nothing less than the truth when he credited his fellow-countrymen with a genius for "muddling through."

So it has ever been, before and since the spacious days of the Gentlemen Adventurers, the Pilgrim Fathers, and the rest; our Empire and our wealth have grown and prospered by some kind of providential accident which political scientists have never satisfactorily explained, and in which no foreigner can be expected to believe. At this moment we can easily excuse any nation that proclaims itself unable to keep track of the foreign policy of our country, be it in Germany, or Russia, or the Middle East, for we are by no means certain that we follow it ourselves. On various occasions we have already dealt in these pages with Mr. Lloyd George's acrobatic attitudes towards Germany since the Armistice, and with his alternating policies and perorations in regard to Russia. No sleuth-hound could trace these back to the lair wherein immutable principle resides. If we examine our Middle-Eastern policy, we are in the same quandary. We ask ourselves what guiding star it can be that is leading the Prime Minister to impose upon India a Constitution which is neither of the East, nor of the West, to divest Great Britain in theory and in practice of the high responsibilities that the past has laid upon her in that great dependency; and yet, at the same time to assume the enormous burden of controlling the destinies (under the form of a mandate or protectorate) of the vast region of Mesopotamia? Are we, indeed, following a star at all, or is it a will o' the wisp, when we abandon our work in Egypt, half-achieved, and turn our attention to re-settling Palestine against the wishes of its inhabitants (so much for self-determination!) with pilgrim colonies of undesirable aliens?

Fortunately, although late, it is not too late to try to concentrate the serious attention of the British public upon this latest adventure—the transfer of the reins of Government from the hands of Great Britain to those of Egypt, about a year after the Allied and Associated Powers had conferred upon England the title and responsibilities of the Protector of Egypt. The present situation reminds us ominously of the "policy of scuttle" of the early eighties which it has taken nearly forty years, made glorious by the memory of Gordon and the far-seeing statesmanship of Cromer, to redeem; but let that pass. To-day, or rather yesterday, we were faced with organised unrest in Egypt—a phenomenon that is now recognised as a usual aftermath of war. Straightway we proceed to quell the disturbance, to arrest and deport the agitators; and then, after a brief interval, we invite them to our Council table to evolve some plan of self-government for this stiff-necked generation. A few weeks elapse, and from the dark recesses of a conference room there emerges a document which purports to be the heads of agreement arrived at between Lord Milner and Zaghoul Pasha. Up to this moment we are unaware whether these pro-

posals have been accurately transmitted to us through the Press. We only know that, whilst the British Parliament and people have never been seized of them, they have been publicly debated in every town and village of Egypt. Is this the "New Diplomacy" or "Open" Diplomacy? If so, it has a chequered career ahead of it; for it is quite inadmissible that, before making fundamental alterations in the status of a British protectorate, the last people to be consulted should be the predominant partners in the concern. Nor must it be overlooked that other countries, notably France, have commercial interests in Egypt. We cannot be surprised that, in these circumstances, a number of questions on the subject of the proposed Convention are to be addressed to the Foreign Secretary at the opening of the *Chambre* in November, and in the Italian Parliament also.

Let us hope that, by that time, Lord Milner will have received from Zaghoul and Co. some report as to the reception which the draft scheme has met with at the hands of the Egyptian people, and that the British Cabinet, hitherto unacquainted officially with the outlines of the proposed Convention, may see fit to communicate its opinions thereupon to the faithful Commons. It would be just a little ludicrous if foreign Governments were to have full-dress debates upon various clauses of the future Agreement, and if "properly accredited representatives" were to conclude a Convention of this vital importance, before the British Parliament has given a second reading (as we may call it) to the far-reaching principles involved.

We confess to a certain amount of surprise not un-mixed with dismay that, in these latter days when so much lip-service is paid to the *vox populi*, these negotiations should have been thus far conducted in *camera*, so far as Great Britain is concerned. It is quite conceivable that Parliament may take a different view to Lord Milner and Zaghoul Pasha's as to the extent to which we should abandon our protectorate over Egypt in exchange for an alliance; if it does, then many hopes will have been raised in vain, and more harm than good will result. It is also certain that the proposed abolition of the Capitulations will be the occasion of much anxiety among foreign Governments which are responsible for the safety of their own nationals, both as regards life and property. We have not yet been told what the substitute is to be, but we can be sure that all the chief Chanceries of Europe will have a good deal to say before the Capitulations are finally disposed of.

The truth is that Egypt cannot be dealt with as though it were Teschen, or the Hedjaz. No, not even to please President Wilson. At a time when relations between France and England had long passed breaking point, Napoleon said, "If once Egypt were in possession of the French, farewell India to the British," which points to a very real danger, if ever the Suez Canal should pass beyond the political control of the great Company over which France and England have the directing voice. So Bismarck, in later days: "Egypt is as necessary to England as her daily bread," laying stress not upon the commercial value, but upon the strategic necessity of securing our communication with the East. Read Lord Cromer's 'Modern Egypt,' or Sir Valentine Chirol's latest volume, and mark how, with varying degrees of emphasis, the same is proclaimed. That truth is not cancelled by the appearance of the new Convention. Therefore, we insist that, until the Parliaments of the Great Powers and the Chambers of Commerce and of Shipping have been convinced that the hour has come when Great Britain, the recognised Protector of Egypt, may safely abdicate the authority entrusted to her by her Allies, it is our bounden duty to go steadily forward upon the path that has brought to Egypt peace, justice, and great prosperity, for which we are the trustees.

## THE USE OF THE GLOBES.

IN books which were the masterpieces of their day, but have since become the repositories of old habits and fashions, we were frequently informed that among the indispensable accomplishments of every well-educated young person was the "use of the globes." No

seminary was complete, unless it was able to announce in its prospectus that, along with music, dancing and deportment, it also instructed its pupils in the "use of the globes." The importance attached to this branch of instruction indicates that something more was intended than a mere assimilation of the rudiments of geography. The "use of the globes" was obviously supposed to have a specially humanising influence on the practitioner. We think of the children of 1820 or thereabouts as divided into two classes, between whom an impassable gulf was irremediably fixed. There were the children of light, who knew what was implied by the "use of the globes," and there were the children of darkness, for whom globes did not exist. For the children of light, life was a rounded perfection. For the children of darkness existence was utterly and irreparably flat.

We were accordingly somewhat intrigued the other day to read in a leaflet courteously brought to our notice a statement to the effect that a "globe should be a normal part of the equipment of every pupil." Here was an echo from the past and a revival of that mystical problem concerning the importance of handling, contemplating, and continually keeping in mind the uses and properties of globes. It is true that the leaflet in question introduces its globes as mere appliances of the geography class; that it describes them coldly and precisely as "cheap, durable and attractive"; that it refers to them in the same breath as the atlas; that it classifies the seven separate, distinct and beautiful globes thus offered to our young people showing the political divisions of the world and chief trade routes, as exhibiting the world's orographical features, as indicating the world's annual rainfall, as revealing the January temperature at sea-level, as displaying the natural vegetation regions and ocean currents, and as marking the routes of chief explorers, and dates of discovery, etc.\* But we feel that all this apparently straightforward and single-hearted description covers a purpose intrinsically deep and indefinable. There is a subtle and secret benefit to be derived from the use of globes, a benefit which in less democratic days was reserved for the sons and daughters of the privileged, and alluded to with a laconic discretion among such platonic and refining influences as music, or the polite activities of Professor Turveydrop. This is an age which masks its mysticism under an appeal to science and reason. We are not therefore surprised to find that the globes, which from being the monopoly of Mayfair and Kensington, are henceforth to spread their beneficent influence throughout the English-speaking world, are here insinuated upon us as merely a "long-felt want among expert teachers of geography," and disparagingly described as "small and inexpensive." This is not the first time that a quasi-religious rite has been imposed upon an incredulous world by virtue of an appeal to the mere intelligence. We are not deceived by the inscription "E. M. Walters & Co., 71, Goldstone Villas, Hove," which we read at the foot of this apparently simple leaflet. The unwary reader, calling at Goldstone Villas (there is a Rosicrucian flavour about Goldstone), might expect to find no more than a manufacturing firm anxious to sell "our new Rubber Globes, cheap, durable and attractive," at four shillings apiece. We, on the contrary, should expect to walk straight into a page from 'Zanoni.' For us the globe has indefinable, but none the less comprehensive and tremendous, qualities. Our first preoccupation on recently coming upon the work of that aspiring and audacious heretic, Professor Einstein, was to ascertain whether the man who had abolished Euclid had left us the globe. We wasted no sympathy upon Sir Oliver Lodge, who had lost his aether, or upon any of those unhappy physicists who had had the absolute truths of generations rudely torn from their grasp, and reduced to a limbo of statements merely relative. For us Prof. Einstein fell or stood by his treatment of the globe, and only when we discovered that his treatment of the globe bordered upon disre-

spect did we join the general outcry against the impiety of the higher mathematics.

We will not present instances of the mysterious importance of the globe as a subject of contemplation. It is a matter for faith and conviction rather than proof. King Lear in his inspired ravings called upon the gods, as his supremest curse, to "strike flat the thick rotundity of the world," and his successor Queen Victoria sits majestically to-day fronting the Mall with a globe in the palm of her hand. The globe remains to-day as much a part of the outfit of every crystal-gazer as it was of the mediæval necromancer. According to the disposition of those who use it, the globe has a decisive influence upon character and achievement. Napoleon would never have conquered Europe, if he had not in early youth contracted the habit of standing beside a globe, gazing upon his own shadow cast upon its suggestive convexity; and Alexander would never have wept for more worlds to conquer, if he had not had an inkling that the Earth was round.

We are glad to think that the youth of England now have within their grasp an opportunity to practise the "use of the globes" in circumstances which will ensure a reverent and becoming attitude towards them. We like to think of these Rubber Globes, 14½ inches in circumference, in the hands of all our children. Let the influence work. The whole secret of this enterprise of "E. M. Walters & Co., Goldstone Villas, Hove," lies in that word "attractive," which, in spite of all the plain common-sense which characterises their announcement, has inevitably crept into their prospectus. We have seen these globes, and we have gazed upon them with a profound delight which seemed to fortify and refresh the inmost sources of our being. We trust that no school, private or public, will omit to get at once into touch with Messrs. Walters, whose leaflet may prove to be of an import not less tremendous than the theses of Wittenberg, or the 'Novum Organum.' And teachers, watch your pupils carefully. In their use of the globes you shall know them. If you shall one day find some unregenerate young person using one of these globes for a football, you will know that you have before you a Napoleonic spirit who will in some way bring evil to his generation. Hand him over immediately to the Secular Arm.

JOHN JOSEPH COTMAN.

NEXT year will be the centenary of the death of John Crome, who died on the 22nd of April, 1821, and the citizens of Norwich are making preparations to commemorate the event by a loan exhibition of the works of this great master at the Castle Museum. Naturally this movement has to some extent awakened an interest in the Norwich School of Painting. It was founded by Crome, and after his death its traditions were carried on by John Sell Cotman until 1833, when he came to London to take up his appointment of drawing-master at King's College School. After his departure the Norwich School, having flourished for thirty years, ceased to exist. Crome began painting by studying Wilson and Gainsborough, but the Dutch masters influenced him most. He painted, as he said, for "air and space," and took no poetic licence with his subjects. His advice to his pupils was always to give dignity to whatever they painted; even on his death-bed he begged his eldest son never to forget the dignity of art. "John, my boy, paint, but paint for fame, and if your subject is only a pigsty—dignify it." On the other hand Cotman, owing to his want of success, varied his manner considerably. He painted chiefly in water-colours, and had a leaning towards architectural subjects; he devoted himself for a time to seascapes; intermittently painted in oils; and at one period called himself a portrait painter. Crome represented nature as he saw it, Cotman endeavoured to improve on it.

Much has been written respecting these two painters, but there are other members of the Norwich School who have been neglected, especially John Joseph Cot-

\* The New Era Globes. E. M. Walters and Company, 71 and 84, Goldstone Villas, Hove.



man, the second son of John Sell Cotman. As an artist he would possibly have rivalled his father, but unhappily his undoubted genius was marred by an eccentricity, which gained for him the appellation of "Mad Cotman" by those who did not know him intimately, and which ruined his career. His father was a man of excitable temperament, and subject to periods of hilarity alternating with fits of deep depression. His son, in recording reminiscences of his own boyhood, said of his father that intense labour and want of sufficient success tended to depress his spirits and render his temper harsh, the effect of which was much felt by his children. Unfortunately the same temperament developed itself in the son to a greater degree. He gave way to such paroxysms of rage that at times he almost became bereft of reason. He was conscious of his failing, which, in addition to his ungovernable fits of temper, was a want of stability. He wrote, "One of the defects in my character is now, and has been, indecision and want of perseverance." This was undoubtedly the case. An entry in a diary, "My plan is now to rise at seven, and to get two hours work before breakfast" is followed by "Rose late, nothing done before breakfast—not even shaved." In spite of these infirmities he had a courteous manner and genial disposition.

John Joseph Cotman was born on 29th May, 1814, at Southtown, Great Yarmouth, whither his parents removed three years before from Norwich. When the boy was ten years of age the family returned to reside in that city. Young Cotman was apprenticed to his uncle Edmund, a lace and silk mercer in London Street. He detested the business, and with a sensitive pride, felt himself degraded. He rebelled against the duties of the shop, as his father had done in his youth, and spent much of his time sketching in the neighbourhood of the city. A young man of means, named Joseph Geldart, who threw up the study of law to follow art, was Cotman's boon companion in these rambling expeditions. Ultimately Cotman was removed from the shop and became an assistant to his father in giving drawing lessons. His talents quickly developed and became much appreciated. When Cotman senior and his eldest son, Miles Edmund, settled in London, all their teaching in Norwich was left in the hands of the younger man. Terms at this period were fairly remunerative, as his father advised him not to take less than half-a-guinea a lesson, adding "you gain no credit by working under price; if a man does not value himself he will be undervalued by the world—depend on it." Unfortunately, the malady of his brain, which periodically affected him, caused his classes to be broken up, and his success in life to be impaired. His sole means of livelihood became the painting of pictures; they, however, brought but little remuneration. He also, like his father, executed some portraits, chiefly in pencil and chalk. After struggling with adversity for many years, he died from cancer at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital on 15th March, 1878.

In spite of all the disadvantages under which he strove, many of his works display considerable merit. His art was sound, due to careful training by his father, who encouraged his son to persevere. "Keep up your spirits, my lad," he wrote, "you have abilities that only want rousing, and one time or other they will come into play." His paintings, chiefly executed in water-colours, are marked by a considerable depth of colour and a great force of style. They have almost the warmth and character of oil painting. Nearly all his subjects were chosen in and about Norwich. The river Wensum attracted him; the four remaining towers of the walls of the city, likewise the old Norman structure, the Bishop's Bridge, known to every visitor to Norwich, may be found in many of his landscapes.

His larger works were carefully handled, but his small sketches, executed with extreme rapidity, display greater individuality. J. J. Cotman is represented in the Castle Museum, Norwich, by one oil painting and two water-colours, but most of his works are locked up in private houses in Norfolk. One landscape by him was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1853, and eight pictures, all scenes around Norwich, were hung at the

British Institution in the fifties of last century. His art deserves to be better known, and not confined as it is almost entirely to Norwich, where there are persons still living who remember this eccentric painter wandering about the streets of the city, a conspicuous figure in his peculiar attire.

#### THE ETERNAL IRISHMAN.

THE performance of 'The White-Headed Boy' at the Ambassador's Theatre bears more than one moral; there are two at least, and a third, if you are willing to admit that there are two sides to a question.

Denis is Mrs. Geoghegan's White-Headed Boy. Since his birth everything has been lavished upon him, from his mother's love to his brother's hard-earned savings. The rest of the family has had to wait, forgoing pleasures and opportunities, while the meagre earnings of the shop enable Denis to follow horse racing; and in his spare moments to study medicine at Dublin University. Three times he fails to pass his examination, and then the Geoghegan family puts its collective foot down—with the exception, of course, of the mother—and decides that he shall forthwith emigrate to Canada. But, unfortunately for the Geoghegans, there is a lady in the case to complicate matters, in the person of Delia, to whom Denis is engaged. Denis refuses to take her to Canada unprovided for, and resists all offers of assistance from his distracted family. He will have nothing more to do with them, will be free of them entirely; and then along comes Delia's old rogue of a father and lands them all in a pretty mess by threatening to bring an action for breach of promise. And so the game goes on.

A deal of clever acting and some delightful situations make a very enjoyable play out of this material, and incidentally provide the clue—if any be needed—to the insolubility of the Irish problem. The plays of J. M. Synge were always unpopular in Ireland because they dealt too faithfully with the Irish character; when George A. Birmingham produced 'General John Regan' in his native country, the theatre was wrecked by the outraged peasantry. And Mr. Lennox Robinson is likely to be coldly received on the other side of St. George's Channel, should he ever have the temerity to transfer his players and properties thither. For this comedy displays to the fullest disadvantage the capriciousness, instability, and perversity of the Irish people. "Truth," as the Geoghegans' Aunt Ellen told them, "is a dangerous thing."

Truth is also, as Donough Brosnam remarked, "the hardest thing to believe," and it is indeed strange that in these days a play so entirely Irish in sentiment should be received with such great enthusiasm by an English audience. When, after everything has been offered Denis in vain, his eldest brother, in a burst of misplaced political fervour, remarks "He wants to be free, like Ireland, and here we've been, like poor old England, offering him everything except what he wants!" (Moral number one—the only one, we suspect, which the author meant to point, but the least convincing of the three which actually emerge) the play was held up for fully a minute while the audience registered its approbation of this sentiment. And there lies moral number two, a disconcerting one. Moral number three appears on probing a little deeper into moral number one. Mrs. Geoghegan is right after all; her son is indeed no fool. He is a shrewd, ungrateful, engaging knave who refuses to be satisfied. Everything is done for him and nothing by him, until by his obstinacy he reduces them to impotence, and so eventually gets his own way. Whereupon he turns round and tells them that all his life he has been thwarted and handicapped and ill-used. Could any moral be plainer? Furthermore we suspect from his general behaviour that when he does get what he wants he no longer wants it. Anyhow, it all serves the rest of the scheming family thoroughly right. The curtain falls with the problem only partly solved, as indeed is bound to happen with any problem concerned with people who make a hobby of grudge-bearing and who are only happy when they are dissatisfied. Morals, however, rarely adorn a tale, though too

many might conceivably spoil one. The play *qua* play is delightful. There is something attractive about the very contrariness of the Irish people, taken individually, which altogether overcomes for the time being our differences with them as a political whole.

If you would be captious, there are several little things to which you might take exception. You might, for instance, object to paste-on side whiskers which do not match the remainder of the scalp. Or you might enquire how Mrs. Geoghegan managed, in spite of her manifold domestic duties and her no mean age, to retain a complexion of such rare beauty, and a general physical preservation considerably superior to that of her eldest son. You might even consider superfluous one or two rather broad obstetric allusions. Or on the other hand, like Gallio—and ourselves—you might care for none of these things. For they are completely overshadowed by the play's genuine merits.

#### THE CONQUERING TENOR.

OF all the nobler human instincts, the one that is most frequently degraded is the instinct of hero-worship. The man of sense worships his fellow-man little and cautiously and, if possible, from afar; the hot, naked, enthusiasms of Carlyle are shared only by the emotional and immature. To dedicate the expression of one's loftiest dreams to a seeming god, as Beethoven did to Napoleon, only to discover too late that the god is "even as you or I," is to taste a self-accusing bitterness that may quickly turn to pessimism. A cynic has said that the only man fit for disciplined adoration is he who is safely dead, and whose letters have all been burned. Human nature, it is true, is never quite so great as our imagination paints it; hidden somewhere in every man is the ineluctable taint of the serpent.

Each decade has its own special type of hero. The strong, silent men—of the Cecil Rhodes and Kitchener type—are still strong and silent, but they live among us unregarded and unknown. Other and more fascinating gods are with us—gods with golden voices, inviting gestures, propitiatory glances and "romantic" pasts. In the place of silence there is daily volubility; an uneasy sentimentalism, a gaudy emotionalism, grows tropically, where before there was strength. The pioneer has been ousted by the opera singer: the man of intellect has been conquered by the vulgarian, whose only distinction is a vocal abnormality. Where the mime of the screen has his thousands of worshippers, the opera singer has his tens of thousands. In days so vulgar as these there is here no matter for surprise, for vulgarity is occupied solely with the surface of life. It loves life's noise and glitter; its greedy appetite feeds on life's tumbled banquets; things are not only "what they seem," but a little more also. It is maddened by *auri sacra fames*, and for it the acquisition of money is the only standard of success; to it, only what is naked and strident is beautiful; and it gloats nastily over the sanctities of life and religion.

This new god, this worshipped homunculus, is now being presented at the Shaftesbury Theatre by the genius of Mr. Maurice Moscovitch. Whereas hitherto the opera singer has been seen only as an interpreter of the lives and passions of others, he is now nightly being revealed by Mr. Moscovitch, living his own life, suffering, triumphing, but always posturing. The picture, for all its appearance of complete truth, is true only in part; the "great lover's" insincerity, that cardinal weakness of all mean natures, is pitilessly exposed, and here at any rate the authors of the drama have not shirked unpopular truth. For the rest, he is just such a figure as the gross mind of the public has always imagined the opera singer to be; that is to say, he is unlike the real, authentic creature as it is possible for two human creatures to be.

Now, what is there in the flamboyant tenor of the stage, and what is there in his life, that so conqueringly dominates the popular imagination? There is, it would seem, everything: limelight, excessive emotionalism, the rich seduction of music, the lie of simu-

lated heroism, high fees, and all the glamour of a Bohemian life. He is identified with the characters he portrays; he has all their virtues, and if he possesses their vices also, those vices are always soulfully "picturesque." He lives remotely a life of fabulous luxury. He is seen only at his supreme moments. His press-agent "dopes" the newspapers. He travels in unexampled splendour from New York to London, from London to Paris, from Paris to Berlin. Wherever he is seen, there are acclamation and a rapid beating of the pulse. In a very short time he becomes a superman, gifted with intellect, understanding, and all the graces of a polished gentleman. It is not only to one class that he appears thus, but to all classes. The ladies of Mayfair fall victims to his luscious vulgarity as readily as the scullery wenches of Hampstead. The chauffeur is bidden to drive to Covent Garden, not because an opera of Mozart, or Gluck, or Bizet is to be presented, but simply because Signor X, or Herr Y, or Mr. Z is to sing. The man is worshipped, the music ignored. It is only when he appears that both stalls and gallery are filled. Not even Wagner himself can compete with the tenor's fatuous smile, his clumsy acting, his sudden falsetto blisses, his ravaging scorn.

Let us drag this figure of heroic proportions from behind the footlights, and examine him. It is not a pleasant task. He is nothing that he has seemed; he is all that he has appeared not to be. Physically and morally, he is flabby. His vanity amounts to megalomania. Unless continuously flattered, he becomes bored. Ridden by jealousy, he protects his sensibilities by pretending to believe that as an artist he stands alone. His ignorance of life is incredible; of learning he has none. He reads nothing save his press cuttings. Moreover, he has no knowledge whatever of the vast literature of music; he has not even the key to that literature, for he is unable to play any instrument. On the stage he has appeared to possess at least a rudimentary imagination, but in reality he is nothing but an automaton, carefully and elaborately drilled to such a state of perfection that he produces all his efforts mechanically. His nature is so shallow, his mind so impoverished, and his emotions so undisciplined, that, if he possesses a character at all, he does not know what that character is; it is in a continual state of change; it instinctively takes the colour of its surroundings. In such a man there is, and can be, no sincerity; he is swayed by every momentary feeling; he is everything in turn and nothing very long.

Yet so much power does he possess over the imagination of the public, that one can, without exaggeration, say he directs and controls the development of modern operatic music. Composers are his slaves. They work for him, create parts for the exploitation of his peculiar gifts, select plots that can be made to revolve round his personality. To-day a new opera has no chance of success unless it is smeared over with sex, and it is at simulating sexual emotion that the tenor is an expert. He can manipulate the crudest emotions skillfully enough, but he misses altogether any feeling that is elusive and secret—any bit of psychology that does not lie on the surface of the mind. Hence musicians compose down to his level. Their operatic plots are concerned exclusively with lust, jealousy and revenge. That, perhaps, is why during the last two centuries no English composer has written a first-rate opera: the greater spirits have stood aside, leaving the field open to those Continental musicians to whom dignity is unknown, and to whom unrestrained voluptuousness is second nature.

## CORRESPONDENCE

#### THE STATE OF IRELAND.

SIR,—If it were not for the evidence of the daily papers it would be impossible to believe that such a state of affairs as that which now exists in Ireland could be permitted to continue: and should be now taken so much as a matter of course in such an integral part of the British Empire.



Ireland now contains, we understand, eleven infantry brigades, with the necessary cavalry, artillery, engineers, and departmental troops, and it is stated that the staff of the First Division from Aldershot is now there also. Yet the presence of these troops in Ireland seems to have little or no effect upon the murder policy of the Sinn Feiners: and the situation cannot be conducive to a reduction of expenditure! Surely the time has arrived for a more active policy? Only a policy of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," would bring home to this Irish rabble the fact that such a state of things cannot continue. Men are murdered for no apparent reason; constables are shot down, merely because they are attempting to do their duty. And yet no system of retaliation follows! The police are roused into taking the law into their own hands, and avenge the death of their comrades, but are reprimanded, much as General Dyer was reprimanded for taking strong action, when it was needed. Martial law is not proclaimed, because, as you suggest in the SATURDAY REVIEW of August 7th, it is unacceptable to the trade unionists and other anarchists in the country.

A military officer of much experience suggested to us recently that martial law should be proclaimed, that prominent Sinn Feiners should be seized, and that one should suffer the extreme penalty in retaliation for every unfortunate individual who is murdered by the "Irish Army." "Monstrous!" many will exclaim. "Monstrous that an innocent man should suffer for a crime in which he has had no part." But would it be more monstrous than that a man should be murdered for attempting to do his duty? We have it from a trustworthy source that most of the murderers of Mr. Brooke and of others, are known to the authorities, but cannot be convicted, owing to the fact that no one will give evidence against the murderers, lest by doing so he might endanger his own life! Surely such men, who cannot be convicted through lack of evidence, might stand as hostages for the lives of men at any rate more innocent than they.

Immediate and drastic measures should be enforced, despite all protests from trade unionists and anarchists, who are, after all, only a section of the community. But perhaps he who should introduce drastic measures himself fears the long arm of the Irish Republic?  
J. S.

#### POLITICAL COMPARISONS.

SIR,—Mr. Lloyd George's adventure in the quarry of quotation and simile, in the course of his heroics at Llandudno, was singularly ill-advised.

After all, the comparison of Mr. Asquith with Jehosophat is not apparent, and Mr. Asquith might well retort with a reference to "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin," the application of which, to "Limehouse ravings," and the congratulations to the Russian murderers, requires no explanation.

I remember when the former were in full blast, a canny old Scot remarking that human nature didn't change much, for Mr. Lloyd George's advice to "the People" was curiously like Jezebel's suggestion to Ahab with regard to Naboth's Vineyard.

Mr. Lloyd George's theatrical assurance that he will not relinquish the helm of the Ship of State till the storms abate (for which, by the way, he is largely responsible) reminds one comically of Mrs. Micawber, but I confess that I see nothing comical in the appalling prospect which such a threat opens up to my imagination.

FACTUS SUM.

#### MR. SMILLIE'S AIMS.

SIR,—In a letter which appeared in your issue of the 18th September, Major Heathcote asserts that Smillie is just out to smash the Constitution, and compel the rulers of the Empire to take their orders from him. If such is the case, Smillie is, according to the law of the land, liable to be tried for treason and hanged as a traitor, as indeed are all his accessories. It is an offence against the State, and therefore high treason, to intimidate or overawe either House of Parliament,

which is precisely what Smillie-cum-Hodges et ceteri have been doing, while Ministers of the Crown, instead of enforcing the law against such dangerous demagogues, have been making themselves accessible to these revolutionaries, and have temporised with them. It is, in fact, through temporisation that Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Robert Horne have averted a coal strike for the time being, and, although we devoutly hope that postponement may develop into ultimate suppression, we have still the threatened calamity hanging over us, for our British Bolsheviks are allowed their freedom with full scope to exercise their ingenuity in the direction of subverting the Government on the first suitable opportunity.

Your correspondent might well say that such conduct as that which characterised Smillie's proceedings would not be tolerated in any country but this. We use deterrents to put down bigamy and other minor crimes; but treason, sedition, and murder—as in Ireland—are permitted to follow their relentless course with impunity. Indeed, we do want a man and a strong one. We want a man who is independent of the proletariat vote, a man who has a clear insight into the devilish devices of Bolshevism, a man who would have no truck with our country's enemies, whether enemies within or enemies without. Surely such a combination is to be found—if not in the House of Commons, certainly in the House of Lords.

C. H. B. BURLTON.

#### COAL IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

SIR,—The current number of the *Board of Trade Journal* contains the following most interesting communication from the Consul-General in Philadelphia:

"The following record of work done per day by loaders and pick men at the Westmoreland Coal Company at Irwin, Pennsylvania, is of interest at the present time:—

	Tons per man, per day.			
1918	...	...	...	7.48
1919	...	...	...	7.60
1920	January	...	...	6.97
	February	...	...	6.94
	March	...	...	7.55
	April	...	...	7.43
	May	...	...	7.36
	June	...	...	8.18
	July	...	...	8.15

In January, 1920, there was a shortage of cars, which continued more or less up to May, when the car service improved.

At what is known as the Export Mine of the same company the efficiency had risen to 9.29 tons in June, and to 9.20 in July."

I am not acquainted with the Westmoreland Coal Company. Very likely it occupies a particularly favourable position. However, the facts given by the British Consul should give food for thought to Mr. Smillie, Mr. Hodges, and other leaders and misleaders of the coal miners. In a previous communication of mine I showed that the American coal miner produces on an average as much coal per day as five British miners, that therefore an American miner raises as much coal per day as a British miner per week of five shifts. The British miner produces on an average 16 cwt. of coal per day, or four tons per week of five shifts. The Westmoreland Coal Company miner produces per day more than eight tons, or as much as a British miner produces in a fortnight. It is perfectly obvious that America can pay far higher wages to the miner than England, and that mines in the position of the Irwin mine can not only destroy the British export trade in coal, but can sell their coal in England far under British cost price. Unless the British miners see the greatness of the danger, increase their output, and thus give us again an ample supply of cheap coal, England and its coal industries will be irretrievably ruined. It will be too late for the miners to change their policy when the British mines have been closed down.

At a recent meeting the chairman of Bolckow,



Vaughan and Co. stated with regard to the important coal mines possessed by the company:—

"During the year ending June 30th, 1914, the total tonnage raised per man per year was 262.37 tons, and the wages cost was 6s. 4.04d. per ton. For the year ending June 30th, 1920, the tonnage of coal raised per man per year was 170.36 tons, and the wage cost per ton was 19s. 7.96d."

Commentary on these appalling figures is scarcely called for.

J. ELLIS BARKER.

#### THE NATIONAL RELIEF FUND.

SIR,—As its present name implies, this huge fund having been subscribed by the nation for the nation is the business of every individual of the nation. Therefore, for a Briton with solely British forebears to enquire as to its administration, hitherto obscure and wrapt in mystery, is not impertinent curiosity. In 1914 to the writer's knowledge, in one of the Metropolitan Divisions, the Inspector stopped 3d. per week out of every man's pay, which was sent to the fund. Doubtless others and industrial firms did the same. The sole object was relief of distress caused by war conditions—at first chiefly the wives and dependants of men called up at a moment's notice. The secretary at the time was a Roman Catholic, and this may have been one reason why £250,000 was allocated to the relief of victims of the Dublin riots, which had nothing to do with war conditions. Recently £700,000, it is stated, has been allotted to hospitals: again nothing to do with war conditions. These allocations are announced as facts, and, as far as is known, without the slightest consultation with the subscribers as to their wishes in the matter. Have the politicians anything to do with these allocations? In regard to the Dublin riots, it is clear that Mr. Asquith, then coquetting with Home Rule, needed something to allay the bitter feeling in Ireland. As regards the hospitals, the question of closing them owing to increased cost of living, etc., placed the present Government in an awkward position. In passing I would note that most, if not all, hospitals are more or less endowed, whereas those whom the National Relief Fund was formed and subscribed to benefit had no endowment whatever. Many have applied in vain for aid. These allocations without permission of subscribers to objects apart from the design of the Fund, while withholding its benefits from applicants, under various pretexts, have caused considerable feeling in the country, none the less real because it is unvoiced. To allay this feeling and restore confidence, something more is necessary than a bare statement of figures in the Press. Many pence of hard-working men went into that Fund. They have a right to be told the reason, if any, why its benefits are withheld from applicants, and diverted to objects never contemplated when the Fund was started, or connected with it. Perhaps you, Sir, will express your opinion, and elicit those of your readers on what on the face of it appears to be a national scandal. Why should there be any mystery in the matter?

MALGRE.

#### SCIENTIFIC THEOLOGY.

SIR,—Will you permit me to make the following observations on an article which recently appeared by Canon Barnes?

The origin of the solar system has formed a subject of the greatest interest to the human mind from the earliest ages to the present time, and the question which naturally suggests itself is whether the universe, in the midst of which our little earth floats like some insignificant speck, was formed during the course of six days of twenty-four hours each, or was evolved from a nebulous mass brought into existence by the collision of two bodies.

The Hebrew word "Yom," which has been translated "day" in Scripture, does not invariably signify "day," but rather an indefinite period of time; and, as all the most competent Hebrew scholars suggest, the more accurate translation of the original text is:—"In six periods God made heaven, and earth, and sea, and

all things that are in them." This very naturally opens the question as to the length of these periods. We are aware that for many centuries they had come to be regarded as six periods of exactly twenty-four hours each, but geology and its subsection palæontology were then more or less negative quantities; and, as a consequence, there was no solid basis, which would enable us to arrive at an accurate conclusion. An ordinary day was therefore regarded as being the most natural period of time to assign to the text.

The result of these scientific investigations has been to prove that the days, or periods, we read of in the Bible, were not twenty-four hours in point of duration, but that they were periods of hundreds of thousands, or even millions of years. There is, of course, nothing contrary to the inspiration of Scripture in this view, as it leaves the duration of the creative act quite open to the conclusions of scientific research.

There is no question that the theories of evolution explain many extraordinary phenomena of the ascent of animals from some primordial type, with its culminating point in man, who according to these theories has ascended from some remoter ancestor in the shape of the anthropoid ape. But it is impossible for us to apply with success the theories of the evolution of man, regarded as a physical and sensitive creature, to man regarded as a moral and responsible agent. It therefore behoves us to fall back upon the inspiration of the Scriptures for a solution of this problem, and upon a critical examination we find that the only explanation is in such doctrines as the Fall, Original Sin, the Intermediate State, Heaven and Hell. The Scripture was given to us on the authority of God and His Church, and we can only query such emphatic utterances as it contains in the same spirit as we question the Divinity of Christ.

HENRY J. NASH.

#### SPIRITUALISM AND SANITY.

SIR,—Your correspondent "A" has arrived at the very definite conclusion that spiritualism is made up of "the most stupid, the most mischievous and blasphemous pretensions ever set up to usurp true spiritual guidance."

Now I have been investigating spiritualistic and telepathic phenomena for more years than I care to state. And still I am not a spiritualist. I still want definite proof.

"A" has found this definite—very definite—proof, and my respect for humanity in general obliges me to believe that he cannot have arrived at so exceptionally definite a conclusion without full investigation of the evidence.

Would "A" treat me as an honest brother investigator, and give me chapter and verse of the evidence he has scrutinized, and his grounds for arriving at definite proof? If he would I should be eternally (?) grateful to him. Possibly "A" might at the same time give me an explanation of Einstein's theory, which is as inexplicable to me as spiritualism. For obvious reasons I give my name and address.

F. C. CONSTABLE.

Grenville, Lansdown, Bath.

#### OLD STEPNEY AND "TRINITY."

SIR,—The outburst of high-speed journalism on the occasion of the Masonic Service held at St. Nicholas Church at Deptford—during which was unveiled the stained glass window dedicated to the memory of the Rev. Arthur Hart, a Masonic Brother, for many years Vicar of the Church—was accompanied by a singular obliviousness to the long and most intimate association of Stepney Church and Churchyard with the great and varied powers vested in the Trinity Guild and Corporation.

The merest glance at the Index of any of the Editions of Samuel Pepys's immortal Diary, should have acquainted even the most sudden of the scribes with the broad facts of which most East London Masons are cognisant; and the official history of the Guild and Corporation (with the illuminating Minutes of the Elizabethan—Stuart Stepney Vestry) is available in public

libraries—notably, of course, in East London. It is not necessary to decry the valuable services of the late Mr. Hart to “elevate the Ebenezer” of St. Nicholas’s at Deptford: they were estimable though self-sacrificing efforts—as most labours of enthusiastic antiquaries must be in these crowded and anxious hours. But Stepney Church still holds the tomb of Sir Thomas Spert of “Stebonheth,” Founder of the Trinity Guild—a testimony which was set up and maintained by the Trinity Corporation itself: and local records—defective though they may be by reason of State and local convulsions and more than one great conflagration—are full of evidence, direct or indirect, supporting the traditional claims of Old Stepney in this regard, and pictures are extant showing the Mansion by Stepney Churchyard in Durham Row, in Ratcliff, in which the principal real business and much of the solacing amenities of the Guild and Corporation were conducted—whatever the nominal domicile in town or inaccessible suburb may have been—by resident Captains, Masters, Mariners, Gunners, tradesfolk, artificers, craftsmen, of this instrument of Tudor governance.

The border of the historic Mile End Green is still adorned with the prim, trim, quaint Trinity Almshouses and Chapel, just as the Foundation was planted by the officers of “Trinity” at the Ratcliff Mansion when the Mile End Road was scarcely more than the rural and sometimes dangerous route to East Anglian ports and market-towns and to the Forests of Epping and Hainault for ship-timber and fuel. And, in St. Dunstan’s, Stepney Churchyard, lie the mortal remains of many scores of captains, and masters and mariners of “Trinity” (and of the Naval and Mercantile Marine, besides), who shepherded Maritime Stepney and its Vestry from the days of Thomas Spert to those of Nelson and his Admirals—when they had “escaped the dangers of the seas.”

The wise and prescient statesmen of our own uneasy day will doubtless perceive that, for every reason, the old Port of London—as ancient Stepney was when it comprised all the Hamlets eastward of The Tower—should not be robbed of its honourable heritage of intimate connexion with the building and manning of the early—even the earliest—English Navy and the “finding” of the various vessels and often the fleets, of what was largely the Tudor and Stuart Admiralty; to say nothing of the squadrons of the East India Company and of the Associated Adventurers overseas in all directions formed locally, by the by, and furnished with skilled gunners as well as good “pieces” which preceded the dawn of Britain’s Ocean Empire. And, happily, meantime the Stepney boys still seem to turn naturally to the ocean-life and they figure conspicuously on the pay-rolls of every arm of the forces which “guard our Native Seas”—as their forefathers did who were first wherry-men of the Thames.

CHARLES McNAUGHT.

#### THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

SIR,—I heartily agree with Mr. C. F. Ryder:—“They [the Conservative Party] must recognise the necessity of dropping militarism, and with it imperialism from their programme, and go in for a policy of retrenchment at home—combined with the defence of personal freedom and the right of private property, and no commitments abroad.”

Yes, it is England that should be strengthened and reformed first; then she can lead Europe in a new objective of civilisation—“being” instead of “having.” England alone can do all this, and the Conservatives are the root and stump of England—which does not know when it is beaten, and so never is. Napoleon saw that all right. Nothing can permanently change without the consent of the Conservatives; and with their initiative or assent every change is permanent, and true to English genius. The party’s failing of recent years has been that it does not rate itself at its full value to the country, nor appreciate what a great volume of support it has if organisation could only elicit it; and that is probably its defect—want of proper organisation.

OBSERVER.

## REVIEWS

### THE HAPPY AMATEUR.

Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Some Memories collected by Max Beerbohm. Hutchinson. 21s. net.

NO drearier reading can be imagined than official biographies of actors. The quick, hot glories of the past soon fade and die; the triumph of yesterday, so stunning to all who witnessed it, is forgotten in the interests of to-day; and if the personality persists throughout the years, it does so only by the wizardry of literature. Even the comet-like figure of Rachel exists at this hour mainly through the genius of Charlotte Brontë, who knew nothing of the theatre or of acting; her brief page about Vashti—a page that George Meredith valued as one of the greatest in our literature—will keep Rachel before humanity’s eyes as long as noble English is read. Tree still awaits, but probably will never be touched by, the immortalising hand of genius. Mr. W. L. Courtney says in this volume that the last of our powerful actor-managers “as a personality was greater than anything he accomplished.” It is true. Tree was not a great actor. Versatility was his chief characteristic; it was also his bane.

But if his genius was not strong enough to inspire great poetry or undying prose, it has stirred many relatives and friends to write down their memories of him, and these memories his half-brother, Mr. Max Beerbohm, has collected in the present fascinating volume. He has escaped the customary literary entombment of distinguished actors; here he still lives. Lady Tree’s contribution occupies more than half the volume and, with the exception of Mr. Max Beerbohm’s half-tender, half-whimsical essay, is quite the best thing in it. She writes with full, unstinted affection, yet always with admirable taste. “My heart—oh! that it could give words to the lovely, splendid life he gave me; to the rich and joyous years I owed him! . . . Alas! love has made me no poet; but my Heart cries out that in all my life I never had a sorrow until I had the sorrow of Herbert’s death.” She can write so—indeed, nearly all her pages are coloured by feeling and dignified by a steadfast loyalty—and yet her critical estimate of her husband’s work remains, on the whole, sound and free from the distortion of exaggeration. Her portrait of Tree is the most vivid and the most life-like the world is likely to possess.

Mr. Bernard Shaw’s reminiscences of Tree are mainly those of a playwright, and he inevitably, but with humour, discloses the most glaring of the weaknesses of the actor. Tree, Shaw declares, “did not know what an author was.” He usurped the author. He asked nothing from a writer save as a “literary scaffold on which to exhibit his own creations.” The playwright did not create the part: Tree did. It has often been said in praise of him that rarely on two consecutive nights did he act the same part in precisely the same manner. He was always improvising. His restlessness of mind obeyed no curb; the mood of the moment must at all costs be expressed. Now, an actor who assumes this attitude towards his art may be very interesting; and extremely prodigal of surprises; but he cannot always be faithful to the character he is portraying. To present a man conducting himself in half-a-dozen different ways in precisely the same circumstances is not to present him at all. The fact of the matter is, Tree was more interesting to himself than any of the creatures whose characters he interpreted. He was always seeing how far he could go, and sometimes his spirit of daring betrayed him and his art. “I have not got technique,” Mr. Courtney reports him as saying; “it is a dull thing. It enslaves the imagination.” Even if this were spoken as mere *blague*—though Mr. Courtney does not say so—it is typical of Tree. He affected to scorn what he did not possess.

But, when all is said, he was a great figure. If he was an amateur actor, he was at least an amateur of wonderful accomplishment, of great range of feeling,



of incandescent imagination. He had other ambitions than the acquisition of money and the winning of popularity. He did nothing to degrade the stage, and much to uplift it. He had some skill in writing, and an appreciation of natural and artistic beauty as keen as any man of his time. That he should have left behind him a widow zealous to guard his fame, children whose devotion is little short of worship—the contributions of Miss Viola Tree and Miss Iris Tree are at once simple and eloquent—and many friends whose admiration is heartfelt, shows the estimation in which he was held as husband, father, and friend.

#### SARTOR RESURGENS.

Not For Fools. By H. Dennis Bradley. Grant Richards. 10s. 6d. net.

FOR the sake of his customers we hope Mr. Bradley cuts jackets better than jokes. For we do not like his jokes, which are furious and unmannerly; gibes at old men for being old, which is not their fault but their misfortune. Moreover, we must remind Mr. Bradley that if the old men had not saved money for the last hundred years, England could not have financed the war for twelve months, and we should have had to knuckle under to the Hohenzollerns, becoming their tributaries for the present century. Further, we must point out to Mr. Bradley that the profiteers are not old, but middle-aged like himself. Nothing is so striking as the youth of the new rich, as we fancy Mr. Bradley must know very well. Lastly the bureaucrats, against whom he inveighs, are not old either, but most of them in the prime of life, and some quite young. The frontispiece and the coloured plates, which illustrate Mr. Bradley's jests, are erotic to the last degree, and represent what Shakespeare calls "the beast with two backs" in a vertical, instead of a horizontal, position, as we may see glorious youth any night in a dancing room at a restaurant. If this erotomania be the Reign of Youth, God help England! Following the fashion is Mr. Bradley's business. According to the vogue now rampant, Mr. Bradley prostrates himself at the feet of youth, glorious, purple, golden-haired youth, which knows everything and will be served: he implores youth to place its foot on his neck. This wish may possibly be realised, though in a way probably undreamed of when this book was written. For the civil war, beginning with the coal strike, is admittedly urged and engineered by the young men, even the boys, amongst the working-classes.

But when Mr. Dennis Bradley leaves fooling and writes seriously about the war, he not only expresses sense but expresses it with great force and considerable literary skill. We agree with nearly everything he says in his first seven papers. Dora was an outrage, or rather is one, for she still survives. Nothing could have been more imbecile than the censorship of the press during the war. Some censorship there must be, to prevent the publication of articles giving information to the enemy. But the suppression of opinions hostile to the Government, or calling for a termination of the war was indefensible. What was called "pacifism" ought to have been freely ventilated, though we doubt on this point whether the Government was out of touch with the people. Witness the reception of Lord Lansdowne's Letter. In war the people are as mad as their Government. Writing in 1917, on the publication of Russia's terms "no annexations and no indemnities," Mr. Bradley makes the penetrating, but at that time incredible, observation, "the indemnity question solves itself. To the financial mind it is ludicrous. After two more years no nation will be able

to pay an indemnity." In 1917 Mr. Bradley called for a definition of peace terms, a declaration of war aims, by the Allies, and plainly indicated that the war had lasted long enough, and that nothing but universal bankruptcy was to be gained by its pursuance. How was Mr. Bradley able to publish in the press these dangerous heresies? Why, by the simple expedient of paying for columns in the *Daily Advertiser* and other papers and submitting to the Censor this most "perilous stuff" as advertisements! It is astonishing, but this was the law. What editors dared not publish as their own views, they might publish as somebody else's views, provided they were paid to do so! Can anything more ludicrous or undignified be imagined? Dora could always threaten an editor with suppression and ruin: but an advertiser they dared not touch. Though there is little use now in discussing the subject, we agree with Mr. Bradley that the war might and ought to have been ended in 1917. By continuing it too long we have lost our civilisation, and ruined ourselves and Europe.

#### THE ENGLISH CHARACTER.

Arrows of Desire. By J. S. Mackenzie. George Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.

SINCE some sardonic naturalist defined man as *Homo sapiens*, there have been innumerable attempts to attribute certain characters to certain nations, and to discover the causes in the climate or other external circumstances of the case under examination. But most of these discussions strike the ordinary reader as pathetically irrelevant; as though one were to discover that the Welsh, let us say, were addicted to Calvinism instead of cannibalism because of the superior edibility of their mutton. And we are not sure that Mr. Mackenzie has not fallen into some of these pits for the unwary. He thinks, for instance, that most Englishmen are really agnostics under a superficial crust of religion; but surely this is very doubtful doctrine. Agnostics they may be, in the sense of recognising that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the Thirty-nine Articles; perhaps also in the sense that they acknowledge that the old doctrines have to be modified, or their setting changed. But fundamentally one would say that they were religious at bottom, with some scepticism as to the value of the evidence provided from the pulpit. They do still believe that God's in His heaven, but heaven is a long way off, and all is not right with the world.

But these general characterisations break down in other respects. Mr. Mackenzie treats England as a unit, though it is so only politically. He makes no mention of the very real distinction between north and south, with the Trent as a rough dividing-line. The north is not only more active—he will say that is due to the climate—and more thoughtful, but it is more musical and, curiously enough, less artistic. A Yorkshireman will live in a house that is an eyesore, and put coloured photographs of Lucerne on his walls; but he will have the best piano on the market, and subscribe to an orchestral society for classical music, while the southerner is satisfied with ragtime.

Again, Mr. Mackenzie does not seem to have studied the altogether special features of the Londoner. The cockney employs under or over-statement as a matter of course; his wit is a perpetual irony, incomprehensible to the stolid Midlander. The soul of London is essentially flippant; it is too big to take itself seriously. Hampstead laughs at Wimbledon, and Kennington sees something ridiculous in the very name of Kentish Town; whereas Birmingham takes itself very seriously, and one may be quite sure that Edgbaston never jokes about Solihull.

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The two leading foreign indictments against us deserve, and receive, a good deal of attention. The Frenchman, who has a logical soul, calls, or called us, hypocrites; the German thinks, or thought, us stupid. On these matters Mr. Mackenzie is full and satisfactory; his treatment of our sentimentality is less adequate. Why do boys throw stones at live cats, but if they see a dead cat, at once pity "poor puss"? We commend the paradox to a German professor in search of a theme.

Our lack of foresight comes in for rough handling; it is assigned mainly to our variable climate, which has indeed much to answer for. But have we, in fact, less foresight than, say, a German or an Italian? It is true that we do not plan the conquest of the world in advance, nor do we get mentally drunk on Utopian schemes; but a people which admittedly possesses the political sense in a high degree is by no means destitute of foresight. The ordinary Englishman ignored Prussian militarism for thirty years, because it did not seem likely to touch him; but he was very quickly alive to the German naval challenge. Similarly he took very little notice of Balkan intrigues, because the Near East was not his business; but the moment the Germans threatened the road to India he was on the alert. Now that the peril is removed, the critics suggest that he has gone to sleep again; but it is a dog's sleep with one eye open.

Mr. Mackenzie takes a hand, as in duty bound, at the discussion of political reconstruction; and he envisages a most astonishing reformed House of Lords, composed of "recognised authorities in sociology, the theory of government, economics, law, history, medicine, philosophy, psychology, theology, art, the natural sciences, education, scholarship, and other important subjects. They might be appointed partly by the Lower House, and partly by such bodies as the British Academy and the Royal Societies." It may be, as he suggests, that such a body would partially realise the ideal State of Plato, but the average man, with his ingrained distrust of "those damned Professors," would probably pay less attention to the debates than ever. And surely it is a little harsh to include theology in the list; one imagined that the bishops knew something about it. The fact that the only experts in Parliament are the bishops, and that they carry less weight than most other speakers, is not very hopeful for the reformed House of Experts. The British Constitution probably needs reforming, but it does not need to imitate the University Extension Movement.

#### THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666.

The Great Fire of London in 1666. By Walter George Bell. John Lane. £1 5s. net.

IT is pleasant to find a learned antiquary allowing himself to discuss so popular a topic as the Great Fire of London, and Mr. Bell has turned his happy thought to admirable account. He had, of course, previously proved himself a scholarly and responsible historian, a good literary craftsman, and an excellent guide to Old London. Here we have all his qualities at their best, lighted up with an enthusiasm which good Londoners at any rate will find exceedingly sympathetic. Now and then, perhaps, he allows his fervour to run away with him. For example, he declares that, if only a room of the Mermaid Tavern in Cheapside had survived to us as it was in Shakespeare's and Ben Jonson's days, "it would be a place of cosmopolitan resort in London attracting more pilgrims even than visit Westminster Abbey." This very enthusiasm, however, fishes out for us all sorts of picturesque odds and ends, including a note on Prebendary Jackson's amusing article in *Good Words* of August, 1868, in which the writer argued (on approved lines of Biblical criticism) that the Great Fire had never taken place! In this, of course, Dr. Jackson must have been directly inspired by Whately's famous 'Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte' which Isaac Butt so entertainingly followed up with 'Historic Doubts Relative to Dr. Whately.'

Our enthusiast traces the course of the four days' conflagration from beginning to end, and, amid a mass

of history, topography and literary reference, keeps the story of his essential drama always moving. We use the word "drama" advisedly, for, oddly enough, despite the huge material calamity of over 13,000 houses, a great cathedral, the Guildhall, the Royal Exchange, two ancient castles, more than eighty churches, and many other stately public buildings being destroyed, the fire of 1666 was not a personal tragedy. Somehow or other, nearly everybody got safely away and, out of a population estimated at 6,000,000, eight is the largest estimate of the deaths due directly to the flames. Mr. Bell also pays due tribute to the really splendid work done by the King in directing the efforts to control the conflagration, keeping up the spirits of the citizens, and dispersing the popular suspicions of foreigners and papists which accompanied and followed the catastrophe. In all this we see Charles II at his best both as a man and a statesman. In one respect our author joins issue with most historians of the Fire; he does not grieve over the loss of the old Gothic St. Paul's. He finds Wren's classic successor "a better, grander fabric, more worthy in every sense of the site it surmounts, and the status of the metropolitan cathedral." Here most people will be on his side, even from the purely architectural point of view, our country being happily very rich in Gothic ecclesiastical splendour, but apart from Wren's masterpiece comparatively poor in classic. There is certainly not a cathedral in England which, regarded from this standpoint, could at the present moment so ill be spared as Wren's mighty "monumentum."

Mr. Bell's book will, we hope, have one definite effect of causing the Guildhall authorities to devote a room exclusively to relics of the Great Fire. At present these are much scattered. The event was so vast in itself and in its consequences that its records and relics should, as far as possible, be brought together, just as our historian has concentrated them in a literary way in this admirable volume. The book summarises and weighs all previously published writings on the subject from Pepys and Evelyn down to our own day, and is also well illustrated with plans, prints, and photographs. London has had to wait two hundred and fifty years for it; but, if it is done late, it is done well, and, after all, that is the great point.

#### VIVID AMERICAN.

Somewhere in Red Gap. By Harry Leon Wilson. Lane. 7s. net.

MRS. LYSANDER JOHN PETTENGILL was, as her admirers will remember, a widow and the masterful owner and manager of the Arrowhead Rancho; womanly, too, for after work she changed from riding breeches to a laced gown of lavender, and drank tea, which was also laced. A young man staying about the place for his health and the fishing ably plays the part of an easy narrator, and presents us with her philosophy of life in nine fresh episodes. As Aeschylus and the elder Weller suggest, a good judge of cattle should be a good judge of character, and "Ma Pettengill" is no exception to the rule. Having learned in a hard school, she is great in sizing up men and women, and is merciless to humbug of any kind, though she can do her bit in that way herself, when she wants to help another woman; and she knows well that, when romance comes along, it is apt to spoil the best business head and produce unexpected results. We have seen no book of late in which vivid and irreverent America is so happily exploited, and there is real knowledge of human nature in Ma Pettengill's judgments and artful arrangements of fate, exhibited with fine irony in the telling. She "knows a heap about this fool world."

#### OUR LITERARY SUPPLEMENT.

With the issue dated October 30th we hope to publish our Literary Supplement. Will advertisers and publishers please note?



## MUSIC NOTES

**QUEEN'S HALL SYMPHONY CONCERTS.**—For the twenty-fifth season of these concerts we should have expected a rather more brilliant opening than that of last Saturday. Perhaps the really strong programmes are yet to come; at any rate it is to be hoped they are; and in the meantime Sir Henry Wood has it in his own hands to rouse all the necessary interest by concentrating on orchestral performances of such finished excellence that these alone suffice to draw, whatever the subsidiary attractions. Our sole complaint regarding these concerts is that as a rule they are too long; and here, again, there is probable amendment in store, if one may judge by the proportions of the initial scheme, which was got through in well under the desirable two hours. The only novelty of the day, a pianoforte concerto by Wilhelm Stenhammar, a Swedish conductor and composer of some reputation, proved to be quite worth hearing. Not that it is strikingly original or very remarkable for the inventive skill shown in bringing the solo instrument into prominent relief against an effective background. Indeed the piano, despite its constant stream of graceful *arpeggi* and delicate florid passages, alternating here and there with a characteristic melody and a few broadly-extended chords, is on the whole condemned to play the tributary rather than the leading part. The design of the work itself is perfectly clear and it contains a good many romantic touches that recall the spirit of Grieg without suggesting in the slightest degree an imitation of his style or his familiar methods of harmonization. But on first hearing it does not impress as a well-balanced composition or even as a concerto in the modern acceptance of the term. Everything that could be done for the solo part was unquestionably accomplished by the composer's talented compatriot, Miss Johanne Stockmarr, who had not been heard here for several years. She has facile execution, a sensitive unerring touch, and the true Scandinavian feeling for poetic phrasing. Her brilliant yet reticent performance fully merited the warm applause that greeted it; while the instrumental playing of the new concerto was marked by welcome refinement. Sir Henry Wood directed good performances of Mozart's G minor symphony, the symphonic poem 'Sarka' by Smetana, Elgar's 'Polonia,' and Tchaikovsky's 'Francesca da Rimini.' Also Mr. Gervase Elwes, in capital voice, sang a couple of well-contrasted airs from cantatas by Bach, displaying all the necessary flexibility and vigour in 'The White-foaming Billows,' a splendid example of the old master in one of his finely boisterous moods.

**CHORAL AND OTHER SINGERS.**—The variety of vocal styles that the student of such phenomena can discover during a week spent in the London concert rooms is altogether astounding. It is, of course, a development of these later years, and the trouble is that the greater the multiplication of the various styles the farther we recede from what used to be recognised as the true art of singing. To describe in detail all the different "tricks and manners" of up-to-date vocalism would require columns of space; and little good would be done even then, for, sad to relate, it seems evident that there is a public for these things. Each in turn finds apparently a sufficient number of admirers to support and encourage the further advance along eccentric lines, appealing here to the intellectual, there to the naturalistic or purely sensual, and elsewhere again to lovers of the crude, untaught expression of the "national soul." The last-named we heard exemplified at Wigmore Hall the other night by the so-called new Russian Choir, a body of rough voices inadequately trained and incapable of singing in tune even with the aid of a pianoforte. One of the soloists was a would-be imitator of Mr. Rosing, the other Miss Zoia Rosovsky, whose beautiful voice is now marred by a decided tremolo. It was an all-Russian vocal evening and obviously palatable to those who could appreciate it. Much enjoyed also were two recitals given last week with the main object, so far as we could perceive, of demonstrating that in singing the tone and its management were quite inferior in importance to the value and import of the word; while yet a third recital went to show that the dramatic intention submerged all other considerations. Our own feeling about the matter is that, whatever the aesthetic purpose governing these various efforts to stand clear of the crowd in a crowded profession, the one indispensable essential is to have something better than a commonplace, everyday sort of voice, and that an organ refined, rendered flexible and true, by capable teaching, and able to interpret every emotion without losing an iota of its innate purity or charm of quality. To achieve this means the possession of technique, and technique to the singer must imply something more than mere mechanism. Certain talented recital-givers, who fail to win all the success they might, would do well to ponder these simple facts.

**MME. TETRAZZINI AT THE ALBERT HALL.**—An amazing instance of recuperative power in a veritable Italian soprano of the old school—a *genus* that is fast disappearing—was afforded by Mme. Tétrazini on Sunday. She came here last year so unlike her former self as to be almost unrecognizable. She has returned (on her way from Italy to the United States for a lengthened tour) in the possession of a very remarkable measure of her wonted resources. She sang, including encores, some nine pieces in all, not merely without fatigue or strain, but improving in clearness, resonance, strength and agility as she went on. Only once did she fail to bring out a concluding D in *alt* with entire success, and then, when recalled to the platform, she went at it again, just to show that it could be done—and get it she did. It is more than probable that Mme. Tétrazini will go on singing as long as Adelina Patti, whose methods as a concert *coloratura* artist she alone can imitate or approach with any degree of real justification. Hence is it a privilege and a plea-

sure to listen to her, no matter what she sings, as some nine or ten thousand people evidently thought last Sunday afternoon. There were only two other performers, both instrumentalists, and of these Miss Adela Verne deserves mention for her rendering of Liszt's colossal arrangement of the 'Tannhäuser' overture, which, happily, one seldom hears nowadays.

## OUR LIBRARY TABLE

**LEAVES OF GRASS**, by Walt Whitman, selected and edited with an introduction by Ernest de Sélincourt. Oxford University Press (2s. 6d. net). Here is a neat little edition of the best of Whitman, introduced by a competent critic, who makes the best of his author. Whitman, we are told, is in great demand, as an exponent of democracy and America. In spite of these handicaps, he reaches at times a wonderful effect in his rhythmical prose, though he is capable of the dullest stuff ever written by a man posing as a poet. As the Editor says, "Many a parody of Whitman has been written; but the only parodies that have damaged his reputation are those which, unintentionally, he wrote himself. Far more than Wordsworth, he lacked power to criticise himself."

His ghost must view with some disappointment the recent fruits of the democracy in Russia praised by Mr. Lloyd George. Whitman sees the headsman out of date, the scaffold untrodden and mouldy; but his question in the 'Song of the Broad-Axe' appears to be pretty pertinent to-day:—

"Whom have you slaughter'd lately, European Headsman?

Whose is that blood upon you so wet and sticky?"

**ATHENA, A YEAR BOOK OF THE LEARNED WORLD: THE ENGLISH SPEAKING RACES**, edited by C. A. Ealand (Black, 15s. net). The last words of the title, which do not appear on the paper cover, are important, for they indicate that the volume has not the international scope of 'Minerva.' Learning has no boundaries, political or other, and we hope in course of time to see all the Professors on the Continent included in a book of reference of this sort. Meanwhile, Mr. Ealand has produced a very useful work of reference for journalists and editors. All the Britains, to use the phrase on our coins, with America include a pretty wide range of learned institutions, from the South African School of Mines at Johannesburg to the Chemical Laboratory in Gwalior State, India. Khartoum has its Gordon Memorial College, and Tropical Research Laboratories. English in the University of New Zealand seems to be tempered with New Zealand Law; but in Columbia University, New York, and affiliated institutions there are more than twenty Professors, Associate and Assistant Professors of English. Mr. Ealand has done his work well, and will, we hope, for the next edition receive details from those institutions which have failed to send any return.

**THE PROMETHEUS BOUND OF AESCHYLUS**, represented in English and explained by Edward George Harman. **THE BIRDS OF ARISTOPHANES**, considered in relation to Athenian Politics, by Edward George Harman. (E. Arnold. Each 10s. 6d. net). In these two volumes published together the author seeks to establish a theory of political allegory which is against traditional ideas and explanations. The 'Prometheus' is, according to his ideas, a tale of Demos, who is represented as Zeus, newly risen to power and capricious. Prometheus is Aeschylus himself, with some touches of the leader in the State whom he most admired, Aristides. The "foolish marriage" of Zeus to Thetis by this view means the new naval policy favoured by Themistocles. Aeschylus as Prometheus means by his friendship to mortals to advocate the claims of subject allies oppressed by the Athenians, and the contest of Prometheus with Zeus represents the feelings of the poet towards the democracy after his retirement to Sicily. Frankly, we don't believe it, and don't see sufficient evidence for this double *entente* on Zeus. There are political references in the other great dramatists, but there is no instance of a play being devoted throughout to an under-meaning in which the poet is expressing a personal complaint. This kind of allegory has already been made out of Shakespeare, but not to the general satisfaction. When once you have formed your theory, it is astonishing how you can fit the facts to it. We have

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read with pleasure Mr. Harman's able summary of Athenian history and politics in his volume on the 'Birds' of Aristophanes, but we cannot go so far as he does in discovering political allegory. He remarks that "the failure of the play to win the first prize may have been due to the fact that it was not intelligible to the audience." If that was so, can a scholar, writing so many years later, hope to be cleverer than the Athenian audience to whom all the hints "were sailing very near the wind"? We can certainly applaud his concluding words, "If any political lesson may be drawn from imperial Athens, it lies perhaps in the failure of the ruling democracy to govern with impartiality, and in their alienation, with fatal results to themselves, of the educated and upper-class element." The Greeks were good rulers in theory, but bad in practice.

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## AMERICA, IRELAND AND JAPAN

### Governor Cox and the League of Nations

TO GOVERNOR COX.

Sir,

We are told by a *Morning Post* correspondent (October 7) that you are a League of Nations crusader. To you, therefore, the League is something more than an Irish vote-catching instrument; and, in your high conception of its power and utility, it carries a message of hope and encouragement to the toiling masses of Japan in their overcrowded home. Would you not be showing a greater reverence and respect, as a crusader, for this political deity—at whose shrine Asquith, Grey, and our beloved "Robert" pay constant homage—were you to ascertain the view of the League on the Irish problem, instead of proclaiming your own personal opinion? It is intelligible that the League of Nations should uphold and maintain its own law. It is possible that the League of Nations may adopt an attitude towards Ireland similar to yours. But, surely, the League is not in any way concerned with Cox's Law for Ireland. And it is, at least, curious that you should incite the Catholic Irish to fight against the Protestant minority, at the same time declaring that, if elected, you will bring the question of Ireland before the League. Is there not evidence here of muddled thinking?

Now, as a League crusader, seeking to remove the causes of future wars, you will admit that Japan's excess population presents a far more formidable problem than the vulgar Irish squabble which, *au fond*, relates to a conflict between the Christian Churches in Ireland, in itself a disgrace to what, by courtesy, is termed white civilisation. May we, therefore, suggest to you that you should, if elected, influence the League of Nations to take in hand, first of all, the urgent problem of Japan, and to direct its attention at a later stage to the sentimental and largely illusory diffi-

culties of the Irish Christians? For such a course much can be claimed. To Ireland the advantages will be great. Let us consider together the prospect that presents itself.

From the League of Nations Japan will expect to receive facilities for expansion in conformity with the needs of her growing population. And in such a matter, which concerns the determination and definition of human rights, it is to be assumed that the heads of the Christian Churches will be invited to assist the League in the performance of its mighty task. The Vatican has already given its blessing to the League of Nations. The co-operation of the Roman Catholic Church is, therefore, assured. His Holiness the Pope and His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, supported by their respective advisers, will be called upon to pronounce judgment upon the duty of the League towards Japan, as interpreted by the Christian Churches. Forgetting for the moment the back-door brawling of the miserable Irish Christians, will you not look forward with all the enthusiasm of a crusader to the part which the Protestant and Catholic Churches, in warm fellowship and hearty co-operation, may well be destined to play in what may prove to be the greatest drama in the history of the world? Compared with this, how small a thing is a Kansas City Irish vote!

At the word Ireland, the Christian Churches (favoured by the American and British peoples) snarl at each other. At the word Japan, we may expect such a holy communion of thought as to lead up to a great spiritual reunion which shall leave a mark of matchless splendour upon the centuries. For, what will it matter should the Japanese be sacrificed upon the altar of Christ if Carson and de Valera, Mannix and Hughes, Hearst and Robert Cecil are thereby taught to love each other, and to burn Imperial incense to the glory of the white man's God? March on, most honourable crusader. We give you this one warning, as you pursue your dangerous path. Those Irish Christians will cheat you yet!

There is one other point; one of great interest to an American advocate of the League of Nations. The League is expected to protect with fatherly care the economic interests of its members. Does the League suppose that there can be any improvement in the relations between Capital and Labour if a limitation is not imposed upon individual wealth? Capital may be clever enough to avoid this issue. The sleek bankers of Brussels have not raised the question. And the stupidity of Labour passes all understanding. The responsibility, however, of the League of Nations remains. It is true that the Christian Churches are strangely reticent upon the vital world-question of the limitation of individual wealth, but the League is expected to exert high moral authority and to deal in fundamental fashion with our greatest social problem, the problem of extreme poverty co-existent with extreme wealth. To explain your view upon this subject to the American electors may prove to be your last and greatest act as a League of Nations crusader.

Respectfully,

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[ADVT.]

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An extraordinary general meeting of Mappin and Webb, Ltd.,  
was held on Friday, October 8th, at the Savoy Hotel, Mr. Wm.  
Harris presiding.

The Chairman, in the course of his remarks, said: They were  
present to consider a proposal to increase the capital of the  
company to £1,500,000 by the creation of 450,000 new Preference  
shares of £1 each and 300,000 new Ordinary shares of £1 each,  
and also to increase the dividend on the existing Preference  
shares to 8 per cent.

## FURTHER CAPITAL.

As to the need for further capital, this is largely accounted for  
by the continued and abnormal expansion of our business. The  
sales for the year 1919 were exactly three times as large as they  
were for any one year since the formation of the company, and  
this year, up to September 30, they are 30 per cent. higher than  
the sales for 1919. I will elaborate this point a little. In 1913  
we acquired in Montreal a jeweller's business. We have extended  
that business considerably. Our sales for the year 1920  
will be more than ten times greater than they were when we  
acquired the business in 1913.

I next turn to what is called our Contract Department. This  
department is one which deals with orders from steamship companies,  
hotels, restaurants, clubs, and similar institutions.

Our sales in this department for the year 1919 were four times  
as great as they were for any year before the war. Amongst the  
many important firms and companies we supply I may mention  
the London and North-Western Railway, the Midland Railway,  
the Great Eastern Railway, the London and South-Western Railway,  
the Central Argentine Railway, the Cordoba Central Railway,  
the Canadian Pacific Railway, the South African Railways,  
and many others.

## COMPANY'S DEVELOPMENT.

Amongst the steamship companies are the Cunard Steamship  
Company, the Peninsular and Orient Line, the White Star Line,  
the Union Castle Line, the Royal Mail Steamship Company, and  
the Pacific Steam Navigation.

After referring to the development of the company he said:  
We ask you to agree to our increasing the dividend on the Preference  
shares from 5½ per cent. to 8 per cent. as from October  
17 next.

The Preference shareholders will be required to agree to the  
increase of the Preference share capital from £450,000 to  
£900,000, the new Preference shares to rank *pari passu* with the  
old Preference shares.

The Ordinary shares we propose to increase from £300,000 to  
£600,000; the nominal capital will then have been doubled and  
amount to £1,500,000.

## DIVIDEND OUTLOOK.

The raising of the dividend on the Preference shares may not  
meet with the approval of a few shareholders; but I ask them  
to take a broad view of the matter. There is no doubt that  
investors owning securities where the interest has been fixed have  
suffered considerably through depreciation of their securities. The  
cause of this depreciation was the war, and I believe that we  
should not stand by our legal rights and deny an increase to the  
Preference shareholders, but that we should meet them generously.  
In my opinion, the Ordinary shareholders can well afford  
to do this. The advantage to them would be that it will render  
it comparatively easy to raise additional Preference share capital,  
which I believe will bring to the company profits considerably  
in excess of 8 per cent., which surplus will go to the benefit of the  
Ordinary shareholders.

We paid an Ordinary dividend last year of 15 per cent., and  
we have declared an interim dividend on account of the current  
year at the rate of 12½ per cent. I do not like to prophesy—one  
never knows the trend of trade and events—but to the best of  
my knowledge and belief we shall be fully able to maintain the  
dividend paid you last year.

## WORK FOR SHEFFIELD.

You have a magnificent name, a name which stands everywhere  
for good workmanship and good faith. Our business is  
increasing and every branch we have is profitable. We have in  
Sheffield eighteen months' work in hand, and, as far as I can  
see, I have every hope and belief that for some years to come  
the dividend we paid last year will be fully maintained.

If you approve the resolutions which we are proposing we  
intend shortly after they become effective to make an issue of  
200,000 Ordinary shares and 200,000 8 per cent. Cumulative  
Preference shares on terms which I feel sure will appeal to our  
many shareholders, from whom we expect an immediate response.  
Existing shareholders will be given priority in the allotment.

The resolutions were carried.

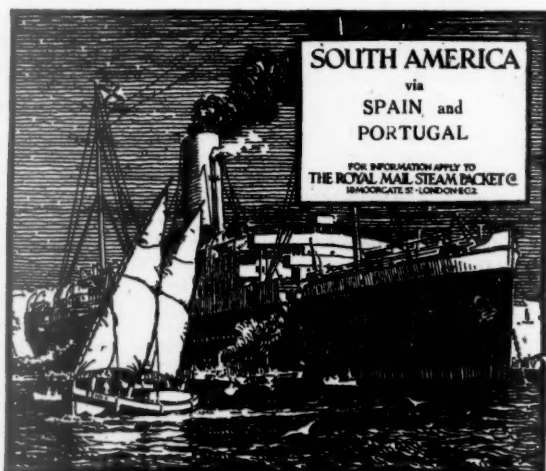
## SUMATRA CONSOLIDATED RUBBER ESTATES

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Sumatra Consolidated Rubber Estates, Ltd., was held on the 11th inst. in the Council Room of the Rubber Growers' Association, 38, Eastcheap, E.C., Mr. P. E. Hervey (chairman of the company) presiding.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen,—With your permission I propose that the report and accounts be taken as read. In submitting them it is customary to say we have pleasure in doing so, and I would like to use that phrase on this occasion, as the results of the year's trading rather bear out the forecast of fair profits in which I indulged at the annual general meeting held last October, the earnings being three times as much as those of the previous year. For the sake of all concerned I only wish that the dividend proposed were in the same proportion, but the burden of English taxation in the shape of excess profits duty takes toll to the extent of one-third of our profits, and thus seriously curtails the amount available for distribution.

Passing to the accounts, I would remind you that, with your approval, the authorised capital was raised to £150,000 from £100,000, and that the capital issued now stands at £125,000, it having been increased by the issue of 25,000 shares of £1 each capitalised out of the reserve. The reserve account has, I am glad to say, been again built up by adding thereto £13,953, the proceeds of 8,000 shares in the Sumatra Proprietary Rubber Plantations, Ltd., which, you will remember, were included in the assets at 30th April, 1919, but not valued for the purposes of the balance-sheet. Also, out of profits there has been placed temporarily to reserve an amount of £11,500, which is the company's estimated liability for excess profits duty at the rate, on average, of 46½ per cent., being 40 per cent. for the last eight months of 1919 and 60 per cent. for the first four months of 1920. Next year the whole account will be subject to the new rate of 60 per cent. The new corporation tax of 5 per cent. on profits also affects us in respect of the first four months of this year, and we shall have to meet a small charge for this. After meeting the tax liability the reserve will show a balance to the good of over £18,000, and I would point out that the company is well served in having such a strong reserve in these difficult times. On the assets side of the balance-sheet you will observe that the company's holding in Sumatra Proprietary Rubber Plantations, Ltd., Debentures has been reduced to £8,000, that company having paid off 833 Debentures at 98 per cent. This leaves us with a holding of 800 Debentures, which stand in the books at £5,513, or the low average of 70 per cent., so that when these are eventually redeemed a handsome surplus will accrue in our accounts. Under the heading of investment account there is also an item of 1,000 shares Sumatra Proprietary Rubber Plantations, Ltd., part of that company's new issue for which we subscribed. The entry rubber in stock stands at a large amount, but needs no explanation on this occasion, as it is practically all sold. In regard to property account, the cost stands at £113,578, being an average of £51 per acre, a moderate figure, which I desire to bring to your notice. Further, the financial strength of the company is evidenced by other assets, and you will notice that the last four items—War Loan, War bonds, Treasury bills and cash in hand together amount to £48,353.

The Chairman having replied to questions, the motion was carried unanimously, and a final dividend of 7½ per cent., less income-tax, for the past year was declared.



## THE CITY

Any benefit the Stock Exchange might have derived from the waning of the holiday season has been more than counter-balanced by the prevailing uncertainty as to the outcome of the second ballot of coal miners. It is quite natural in all the circumstances that the market in Home Industrial securities should present a dejected appearance with the trend of values consistently downward. It would be surprising were it otherwise. Manufacturing interests, as well as the Stock Exchange, want a clear view ahead, and until this is forthcoming, a revival of confidence will not be possible. What investors must avoid is the mistaken process of tarring everything with the same brush. Should a coal strike be the outcome of the negotiations, every British industry will undoubtedly suffer. But, whereas in some cases the injury thereby inflicted will be of a lasting character, in others it will be but temporary. In other words, discrimination is to-day more than ever necessary, or, to repeat an old maxim, the speculator's dilemma is the investor's opportunity.

The tendency on the part of the investor to overlook his opportunities has been demonstrated again and again, as it doubtless will be in the future. A notable case in point has recently been provided by Underground Electric 6 per cent. Income Bonds. When the increase of fares was first put forward, we drew attention to the attractions of these, the quotation at the time being in the neighbourhood of 59. Home Rails as a market, however, were out of favour, greatly to the advantage of those very few investors who seized the opportunity to purchase while the quotation stood some 15 points below its present level. Even at the present figure of round about 70, the outlook for these bonds is obviously far from being discounted. In the absence of traffic figures it is not, of course, possible at present to predict whether or not the full rate of three per cent. will be forthcoming for the current half-year, but there is little doubt that this ultimate object was borne in mind when the revision of fares was made. In this connection, moreover, it should be remembered that the maximum increase permissible has not been put into force. Let us hope that it will not be necessary.

Another security from the same stable, worthy of attention at the present moment, is the 6 per cent. First Cumulative Income Debenture Stock. This can now be purchased at about 73, thus affording a yield of over 8 per cent. It is secured by a specific first charge on the ordinary shares of the London General Omnibus Company held by the Underground Electric Company. The interest—paid less tax as distinct from that of the Income bonds, which is paid tax free—has been regularly forthcoming, and the principal has to be paid off at par in 1945, so that, in addition to an attractive yield, there is ample scope for capital appreciation.

While public interest in Home Railway securities generally shows but little evidence of expansion, it is noteworthy that this market ranks among the firmest of the House, despite the prevailing uncertainty regarding the coal industry. Dealers take the view, and probably rightly, that, as the time approaches for the publication of the current half-year's results, this market will be characterised by "a certain liveliness." In the continued absence of weekly traffic figures, it is not possible to estimate to what extent the companies are benefiting by the higher scale of charges, but the underlying strength of the market at least suggests that the outlook is regarded as encouraging.

While business in the older home securities is necessarily more or less at a standstill, the confidence of manufacturing and trading interests in the future is demonstrated by the steady flow of new issues announced from day to day. Among the more attractive of these is the offer by Lever Brothers of 4,000,000 one-pound Eight per cent. "A" Preference shares. The



prospectus is a particularly colourless document; in fact, presents little information beyond what is requisite in compliance with the Companies Acts. It has been rightly said, however, that this huge enterprise has now reached a stage at which it can reasonably expect to be taken on trust, and there seems little likelihood that those who subscribe to the issue will have cause to regret their investment.

Other new issues of interest include the offer of £15,000,000 nominal 3 per cent. Local Loans stock at 50 per cent. discount. The attractions of this security need no labouring. Housing bonds among other trustee stocks can be purchased to give a higher yield, but Local Loans stock has the attraction of being charged on the Consolidated Fund, and it is rightly classed as irredeemable. So it is particularly attractive to trustees and investors generally who take a sufficiently long view to embrace the period when the general level of interest approximates more closely to the normal. In a word, the stock affords a high rate of interest with the practical certainty of ultimate and considerable capital appreciation.

The market in gilt-edged securities had a bad fit of the tremors when the rumours as to the Local Loans issue became current. When it was learned, however, that the total involved amounted to no more than £7,500,000—a mere trifle in these times—there was a quick recovery, though, owing to rumours of trouble among Mincing Lane interests, this has not been fully maintained. The general tendency of this section is none the less in the main upward, and will continue so, as long as labour uncertainties prevent the more remunerative employment of funds in industry. Any really material appreciation in value, however, is improbable, while the problem of the floating debt remains unsolved. Little is heard of this just now, apart from the weekly publication of its huge total, but it is none the less a problem that must be grappled with sooner or later.

An interesting suggestion which, rightly or otherwise, has received but little publicity so far is that the floating debt should be brought to reasonable proportions by a great national freewill effort in the form of public funds for its reduction. It certainly sounds a somewhat Utopian idea, but is not necessarily impracticable, while it would have the distinct advantage over a compulsory loan that no one would be called upon to give more than he could afford. The war was won by a great national effort, and it is contended that this imposing problem could be similarly solved, at least in a measure. The voluntary services of a really great organiser of unbounded energy would, of course, be necessary, and the assistance of the press and publicists generally would have to be both generous and gratuitous. Well directed energy works wonders.

Among Foreign Rails the trend of Argentine stocks has been a little disappointing, in view of the satisfactory dividends recently announced by the leading companies. The weakness here is attributable to continental liquidation, doubtless in connection with the big French Government loan. When this loan is out of the way, there should be a recovery, for the outlook is good. Mexicans, on the other hand, have been distinctly strong, and give every promise of going better. The motive power here is American support, in which connection a boom in Mexican things generally is being confidently predicted. With investors in this country chary of putting their resources in home industries—which is rather foolish, we think—the time seems undoubtedly ripe for making a market in foreign securities, for money must find employment. At the present time, however, Mexican Government and industrial securities are little, if any less, speculative than Mexican mines, of which so much has lately been heard. As we have said before, the Mexican outlook is encouraging, but a long row must be hoed before it will be possible to regard the country as really settled. Those contem-

plating a speculation here would be well advised to wait until our own labour position is less obscure. There will then be far more attractive opportunities among home industrials.

In the almost complete absence of public business a few Paris sales have had a somewhat exaggerated effect on the South African market, so that there has been a fairly general scaling down of values. The market has not been helped by the gold output figures for the past month, which show a decline of some 20,000 ounces as compared with August. There is nothing in this to worry about, however, as the results merely reflect the seasonal contraction in the labour supply. From now onwards this should gradually be rectified. The main point for investors to take into account is that, consequent upon the gold premium, the mines are earning, and will continue to earn, exceptionally big profits. Very soon we shall be within measurable distance of the dividend declarations for the current half-year. These will, with few exceptions, be on a generous scale, and there is little doubt that their advent will be heralded by far more active market conditions than those ruling to-day.

In contradistinction to South Africans, the Mexican mining market has been ablaze with activity, and there is every indication that the public have been helping themselves to *Esperanzas* with some freedom. Certainly they are getting a good run for their money, and a commendable feature has been the promptitude with which the directors have published the cabled information received from the property. It is an example that might well be followed by other interests. Concerning the future of the mine, it is, of course, not possible to express an opinion beyond pointing out that according to the law of average a continuance of the rich ore body is improbable. The shares are obviously a gamble, and attractive as such, the more so seeing that so far there is nothing "fishy" about the market in them.

The recent shake-out in the Oil share market has done no harm, and at the time of writing there are signs of its gathering fresh strength. In the main the set-back has been due to a cessation of American support, but this is once again coming into evidence. As has been the case in recent months, Shells and Mexican Eagles keep in the van of the movement, the former being bought in the confident belief that a change of domicile is in contemplation, with a consequent larger proportion of the profits available for distribution in the form of dividends. The great bulk of the Mexican Eagle shares now being bought are for American account. The output of the company is now substantially in excess of the capacity of its handling facilities, and the opinion is confidently expressed that with a view to extending these a further issue of capital on attractive terms will shortly be announced. Among the lower priced shares in this division Trinidad Centrals seem worth locking up at anything under 6 to hold for an advance of a point or so. The company appears to have big probabilities as distinct from possibilities.

It is understood that important developments are pending between the firm of Mann, Byars & Company (1920), Ltd., the well-known Glasgow house, and a powerful continental group interested in the same trade. The Glasgow undertaking, which assumed its present form in June last when an issue was made to the public of preference shares, has existed since 1847, and carries on the business of wholesale and retail warehousemen, drapers, clothiers, and outfitters at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle, and other places. Remarkable expansion in profits during recent years was shown by the prospectus, on which we commented at the time of issue. The idea current is that in conjunction with the Continental firm in question a bid will be made for a share of London's trade. Doubtless an official announcement on the subject will shortly be forthcoming.

## LEACH'S ARGENTINE ESTATES

THE EIGHTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of Leach's Argentine Estates, Ltd., was held on the 8th inst. at Winchester House, E.C., Baron F. A. d'Erlanger (vice-chairman) presiding, in the absence, through indisposition, of the Chairman (Mr. William E. Leach).

Baron d'Erlanger said that the profit on trading for the past year, after providing for income-tax and corporation profits tax, amounted to £268,792, compared with £325,126 for 1918-19. The reduction was due mainly to a lower selling price for sugar consequent upon the country's total production being in excess of consumption, whereas last year the exact opposite was the case. The company's subsidiary businesses had shown satisfactory progress. Bananas had yielded a profit considerably over that obtained in the preceding year, and this in spite of heavy losses of fruit owing to want of railway facilities. The sawmill and tannery had also shown substantial increases in sales and profit. Owing to large importations of sugar into Argentina during the previous season there was a fair stock on hand at the commencement of the 1919 crop, at which time prices were satisfactory to the manufacturer without being excessive for the consumer, especially when compared with prices ruling in other parts of the world. The crop had promised to be a large one and in excess of the normal consumption, and it had been confidently expected that the surplus would be allowed to be exported.

As time went on, however, the Government made no move in that direction, and internal competition gradually brought down the price to a low level. Representations were made to the Government by those connected with the sugar industry, and the Government finally decreed that exportation up to 100,000 tons would be allowed, on condition that a quantity equal to one-third of the quantity exported should be placed at the disposal of the Government to be sold, should the occasion arise, at \$4.10 per 10 kilos, which was equal to about £36 per ton. It was understood that export licenses were granted for 101,000 tons, in which this company was interested to the extent of a few thousand tons. In pursuance of the policy to maintain and, if possible, improve the efficiency of the company's factory, the greater portion of the new machinery ordered had now been despatched, and it was hoped that in the near future the balance of the installation, for which preparation had already been made, would be shipped.

Coming now to the situation as regarded the current crop, he had to report events of a remarkable nature. Early in July very severe frosts were experienced all over Argentina, snow actually falling in their own district, while the canefields throughout the Argentine were seriously affected. It was considered that the total Argentine production as originally estimated would be reduced by at least one-third. The sugar situation was again com-

pletely altered; the price soared, and large quantities originally intended for export were realised locally at prices higher than those ruling for export. The Government at once stopped exportation, and early in August the Chamber of Deputies passed a Bill authorising the expropriation of 200,000 tons of sugar at the prices of \$4.10 for refined and \$3.50 for granulated (the company's own quality).

The Senate, which was the higher authority, did not receive the proposal favourably, and referred it back to the Chamber of Deputies, which had postponed consideration for the time being. The Argentine Parliament had now adjourned until May, and it was not certain whether a special session would be convened to discuss the project. There was no reason to suppose that the present Government was in principle antagonistic to the industry, but, to say the very least, it seemed very unfair and unjustifiable to propose expropriation at prices based on obsolete conditions of production and which, in existing circumstances, barely covered costs of manufacture and freight. From cabled advices just received, the total crop of the Argentine for 1920 was estimated to reach 186,500 tons, of which it was expected 13,300 tons would be produced by this company.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted, and the dividends recommended were declared.

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